



Advance HE Collaborative Development Fund: New challenges, new solutions

Application pack

Inclusive institutions: enabling and supporting culture change

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1. Invitation to apply

This specification invites applications to support a project entitled 'Inclusive Institutions, enabling and supporting culture change'. The project involves collating, understanding and sharing members' practice to deliver organisational transformation in an inclusive and sustainable way. Advance HE is looking to fund up to five projects, the outputs of which will form a portfolio of resources for Advance HE members. Advance HE will subsequently curate a capstone report which draws together common findings, lessons learned and reflections about future sector needs. Individual projects can apply for £2,500 – £6,000, depending on the outputs.

The principal aim of the research is to collate and understand a range of techniques, approaches and lessons learned from members' current work to transform, enable and support an inclusive culture, ways of working, or delivery of key strategic aims.

The outputs from the projects will provide an evidence base for members of potential solutions which could include a portfolio of case-studies or other resources. The output could include a reflection on common themes, success factors and learning and could be used to inform identification of priorities for areas still to address (by Advance HE or providers).

We particularly welcome applicants from diverse and under-represented backgrounds to apply.

Advance HE

Advance HE was formed in March 2018, following the merger of the Equality Challenge Unit (ECU), the Higher Education Academy and the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education.

Advance HE is a global member-led organisation and a registered charity that is dedicated to the development and enhancement of higher education (HE) for the benefit of students, staff and society.

By further developing expertise and new thinking Advance HE can help institutions meet the challenges of the present and evolving higher education sector landscape.

We bring together HE-focused expertise in governance, leadership, teaching and learning, and equality, diversity and inclusion, to help deliver world-leading teaching, research and scholarship, and student outcomes. We do this through the provision of specialist knowledge and resources, externally recognised benchmarking and recognition schemes, and a member-focused, collaborative approach.

Further information about Advance HE is available [on our website](#).

We currently have 390 members in over 27 countries, comprising universities, colleges, research institutes and other forms of higher education provider.

2. Application information

2.1 The study of the project

2.1.1 Overview

Previous work by Advance HE considers inclusive approaches to organisational transformation and explores ways in which transformation can unite HE communities in a sustainable way.¹ We considered three key ingredients for transforming organisations:

- + co-creation, clarity and shared understanding of the vision
- + authentic and inclusive conversations and two-way communication, recognising the centrality of dialogue to support transformation
- + joined-up, inclusive and collaborative implementation in which everyone involved feels a part of and takes responsibility for making happen.

We consulted on what really does work better and what needs to be left behind since the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure that we involve all stakeholders who are on that journey.

This work has therefore made a start in exploring how culture change as a strategic enabler operates in HE but we wish to go further with a deeper exploration of actual practices and experiences that members can learn from, and to understand which tools and techniques work in which contexts.

Members tell us that they need to better understand how to approach inclusive culture change:

- + we hear from governors that the work is done by the executive and governor input at a formative stage is limited
- + we hear from students and staff –that they are often presented with the strategy upon completion, and asked their view on how to implement it
- + we know that all our members are facing significant ongoing disruption to their strategies and plans (not least from Covid-19), as well as challenge around teaching and learning including offering flexible pedagogies, ensuring meaningful delivery of commitments to

¹ [Transforming Organisations from student to board: reflective guide](#), Kim Ansell and Mark Trezona, Advance HE, 2021

EDI at all levels, considering the wider environmental and social sustainability agenda, and commitments and embedding their approach to student and staff wellbeing.

To survive and thrive in the volatile education landscape, institutions must consider economic, social and environmental factors alongside increasingly nuanced stakeholder engagement strategies. Factoring in the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 of ensuring “peace, justice and strong institutions” is a welcome addition to considering how HE can think beyond estates management and quality education to evidence how inclusive approaches to organisational transformation in HE positions the sector to meet the challenge of the United Nations’ SDGs

2.1.2 Study or project areas

The aim of the project is to create insights and an evidence based ‘what works’ portfolio of resources to support transformation from the perspective of addressing culture. This will most likely be:

- + secondary research²
- + based on one institution or part of an institution
- + include a minimum of two outputs (see below).

Advance HE is looking to fund up to five projects, the outputs of which will form a portfolio of resources for Advance HE members. Advance HE will subsequently curate a capstone report which draws together common findings, lessons learned and reflections about future sector needs.

The project should seek to establish:

1. The institutional context so that the relevance of the approach and learnings can be understood and evaluated
2. The drivers for the change
3. The desired outcomes for the change – what was the vision for success?
4. The aims and approach. This should include:
 - a. Who lead this action/intervention in the institution?

² It is not anticipated, but if primary research is included in the proposal, Advance HE has 390+ member organisations in over 27 countries which we will facilitate access to for the purposes of this project. It is important that successful applicants consider how to engage a broad base of Advance HE members including representation by: type, mission, size, region/nation, and other context-specific factors.

- b. If and how the institution collected and used data on inclusive culture, what type of data was used, including quantitative and qualitative data and what were the drivers for the choices that were made?
- c. How did the institution engage all stakeholders and at what points in the process?
- d. Which models or frameworks, if any, were used to help manage the transformation?
- e. What approaches had the most success in engaging diverse groups of stakeholders?
- f. What resources/guidance/advice were made use of?
- g. Did the institution engage external support?
- h. Which methods have borne results in achieving greater success in embedding a more inclusive culture?
- i. A curated online space on Advance HE Connect for discussions to continue outside of allotted meetings and sharing of key resources.

5. The experience of a range of stakeholders

6. A summary of insights gained from the project, the specific benefits and impact of culture change including lessons learned.

2.2 Approach

Advance HE wishes to work collaboratively with the appointed team(s) to develop and define the projects parameters and to advise on the outputs.

The project should be undertaken between mid-January 2022 and May 2022 with the final outputs submitted to Advance HE by early June 2022.

Advance HE invites submissions to outline a proposed plan for delivering the project within the allotted timeframe.

The budget offered is expected to range from £2,500 to £6,500 and will depend on:

- + the range of outputs proposed
- + the scope and scale of the intervention being studied eg Board culture, culture in a school/faculty, or organisational culture from student to Board.

We would also welcome a collaboration between two schools/faculties or institutions to compare and contrast. A funding supplement could be considered for this.

The team(s) will need to consider issues of confidentiality in terms of the production and dissemination of the output(s). Furthermore, issues of staff confidentiality will need to be carefully considered to ensure an appropriate ethical response in relation to participant anonymity.

Before the project commences the project team will be required to confirm receipt of the appropriate ethical approval required for the use of the data and information collected and disseminated as part of this grant.

2.3 Outputs

The team(s) will be expected to produce a range of final outputs.

- + A compelling case study or evidence based report for Advance HE members. This will have a clear narrative and supporting data/information, insights into different tools and techniques. It will be evidence based, setting out the range and nature of practice, key themes and issues, and an analysis of approaches in relation to impact achieved.
- + A short management report (not for publication) including, for example, a mini literature review or resources, tools and techniques analysis, overview of findings and recommendations, and clarity about who the recommendations are for. The management project report will also analyse and identify the themes in this practice, lessons learned and the areas that should be prioritised for further work.
- + We would also welcome additional outputs and encourage applicants to be creative and innovative. Outputs would need to be a valuable resource for Advance HE members but could be focused on a specific community, such as teaching and learning staff, EDI professionals, Boards etc. Examples could include blogs, vlogs, a teaching plan, a podcast, a presentation or video, or a good practice template.

The final project outputs (apart from the management report) will be:

- + suitable for public sharing (these can be in the form of short videos, blogs, downloadable resources – creativity welcomed)
- + clear about the intended audience.

Interim outputs will include regularly reporting to Advance HE on progress. The appointed team(s) should allow for up to three virtual meetings with the Advance HE project manager to agree plans and monitor progress.

For transparency, it is expected that the final report and outputs are primarily shared with member institutions. To be agreed, some aspects will be shared with the wider HE and

research sector. The team(s) will need to present the project findings and recommendations at dissemination events as agreed by Advance HE.

2.4 Outcome

The project will provide evidence which would identify and collate practice from as wide a range of members as possible, analyse and identify the themes in this practice, follow up with some lessons learned case studies from a range of member types; identify the areas that should be prioritised for further work.

2.5 Application requirements

Teams should deliver a concise application, focusing on the proposed work and budget. The application should include the following information:

- + team and/or organisation details including name, legal status, full contact details and lead contact
- + details and/or CVs of staff who will undertake the work and a clear breakdown of how much time each person will contribute to the project
- + details of professional experience and expertise relevant to the project, including any experience gained in the HE and/or research sector and/or in the governance of HE and/or research
- + samples of other pieces of work which are similar in focus, scope and tone to the project
- + reasons for interest in undertaking the work
- + any other details considered relevant
- + proposed approach and methodology to deliver the project, including:
 - suggested timetable for the work, including key milestones and clear timescales for completing the project
 - details of how you will work closely with Advance HE, the institutions involved in the project and relevant sector stakeholders
 - details of any potential or actual sensitivities involved in undertaking the work and how they will be managed
 - details of how you will attract relevant participants to be involved in the project
 - risk assessment of the proposed approach and how the risks will be mitigated
 - outline of quality assurance processes

- + schedule of all costs including a detailed breakdown of how costs will be allocated in terms of staff hours, expenses, VAT (if applicable) etc. including any preferred variation to the payment terms (set out in **Section 2.9** below)
- + outline of the team or organisation's approach to equality and diversity
- + details of any claims of unlawful discrimination upheld against the team by any court or employment tribunal in the last three years
- + details of any outstanding claims of litigation against the team(s)
- + details of the team's insurer, the policy numbers, extent of cover, and expiry dates in respect of public liability and professional indemnity insurance, together with copies of the policies.

If the application contains a sub-contracting relationship, please state:

- + the main contractor and sub-contractors
- + the nature of the relationship.

2.6 Reasonable adjustments

Advance HE will consider reasonable adjustments as requested.

2.7 Conflicts of interest

Details of the team's policy on handling conflicts of interest which may exist or arise regarding this engagement must be provided. In the event that a director, partner, employee or employee's representative of the team has an interest or connection in Advance HE, please provide that person's full name, position and the nature of the connection or interest in Advance HE.

2.8 References

The name and contact details of two referees for whom the Team Lead has recently worked (within the past five years only) are to be available on request.

2.9 Fees

The total amount available for all projects, including all fees and expenses is up to £20,000 including VAT. This includes all attendance fees, conference fees and expenses related to the project, including giving presentations at any sector dissemination events.

The printing costs of any final publication, and the costs of any dissemination events or conferences, will be borne by Advance HE.

Our preference is to pay for the work in three stages: a payment of 40% on signing the contract, a second payment of 40% on presentation of the draft report, and a final payment of 20% on receipt of the final report. Payments will be made on submission of an invoice.

Advance HE wishes to agree a fixed price for the work.

In calculating the fee, account should be taken of the fact that Advance HE is a registered educational charity and non-profit making body.

Advance HE is not bound to accept the lowest priced application and shall not be bound to accept the contractor as a sole supplier.

2.10 Application submission

Please complete the [online application form](#) in English.

The questions within the application form is provided in Appendix A to allow for drafting of proposals.

Applications will close at 12 noon (GMT) on Tuesday 21 December 2021.

Advance HE shall have the right to disqualify any teams who submit incomplete or late applications.

2.11 Selection criteria

In awarding the contract, Advance HE will consider the balance between the quality of the application and value for money, taking account of the factors listed in these guidelines and in particular the proposed methodology.

Each application shall be assessed on the following:

- + relevant experience of team members in the fields of governance, culture and organisational transformation, and/or equality, diversity and inclusion
 - + understanding of the context, challenges and development of diversity in HE and research institutes
 - + appropriateness of the proposed methodology in terms of securing credible and robust project outcomes including considerations for delivering in Covid-19 effected environment
 - + feasibility of completing the proposed programme of work to a high quality within the specific timetable
 - + understanding of the need to work closely with Advance HE throughout the project
 - + risk mitigation
-

- + overall value for money.

As a charity with limited resources, we are unable to provide any feedback on unsuccessful applications.

A full assessment matrix can be found in Appendix B.

2.12 Timing

The project will be undertaken between January 2022 and May 2022. The team should note the following key dates:

- + deadline for receipt of applications: 12 noon (GMT) Tuesday 21 December 2021
- + opportunity to Advance HE to ask for clarifications if required: w/c 10 January 2022
- + award of application to successful team: w/c 17 January 2022
- + interim report submitted by Friday 29 April 2022
- + final outputs submitted by Wednesday 1 June 2022.

The dates set out in this paragraph are provisional only and may be altered by Advance HE at its discretion.

Please note that all outputs of your project will need to be produced in Advance HE branding and ensure as broad a range of accessibility as possible. This will be supported by the Advance HE Marketing and Communications Team who will provide brand and style guides, assisting with briefings to marketing agencies, graphic designers and providing feedback. As such, all successful grant winners will be asked to meet with Advance HE's Marketing and Communications Team as part of project initiation to discuss specific branding and proofing requirements in order to agree timescales and budget for these activities prior to publication.

2.13 Contracting

This application is being issued by Advance HE. Any queries relating to the contract should be outlined in a cover letter to your submission.

2.14 Reporting responsibilities

The successful team will report to Kim Ansell, Senior Policy Advisor, Leadership and Governance.

2.15 Further information

For further details, please contact the [Membership Services Team](#), Advance HE:

Any queries should clearly reference the appropriate paragraph in the documentation and, to the extent possible, should be aggregated rather than sent individually. The deadline for submitting queries is **12 noon (GMT) on 26 November 2021**.

Advance HE will respond to all reasonable requests for clarification of any aspect of this application pack and supporting documents as soon as is reasonably possible.

For open applications: Please note that the response to your query may be posted on Advance HE's website without identifying you, therefore your query should not contain any details which are confidential. Please consult [Advance HE's website](#) for any updates.

Please note that no pre-application negotiations are permitted.

Appendix A

Advance HE Collaborative Development Fund: New Challenges, New Solutions Application Form

Section 1

1. Please identify which project you are applying for:
 - + Utilising the Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning for Strategic Change
 - + College-based HE Network: a collaborative space for developing HE culture and practice
 - + Exploring an integrated framework for equality charters
 - + The Future Student Experience Project
 - + Inclusive institutions: enabling and supporting culture change.

Section 2: Team Details

2. Please detail the Organisations represented in the application and the Lead Organisation for the project.
3. Please provide details of the Lead Contact (name, organisation employed at, role and full contact details)
4. Please provide details of the other team member including name, organisation employed at, role and full contact details.
5. Please upload a current CV for each member of the team. Please upload as an integrated single document with the organisation and project area that you are applying for in the title.

Section 3: Experience and Interests

6. Please provide details of the team's professional experience and expertise relevant to the project, including a clear breakdown of how much time each person will contribute to the project.
7. Please detail the team's reasons for wishing to undertake the work and any links to samples of other pieces of work which are similar in focus, scope and tone to the project.

Section 4: Approach and Methodology

8. Please detail your proposed approach and methodology to deliver the project, including:

- + suggested timetable for the work
- + key milestones and clear timescales for completing the project
- + details of how you will work closely with Advance HE
- + the institutions involved in the project and relevant sector stakeholders
- + details of any potential or actual sensitivities involved in undertaking the work and how they will be managed
- + details of how you will attract relevant participants to be involved in the project
- + risk assessment of the proposed approach and how the risks will be mitigated
- + outline of quality assurance processes.

Supporting documentation can be uploaded in the next questions if required.

9. If required, this is an area to upload files which support this methodology can be uploaded. Please upload as a single document with the organisation and project area applying for.
10. Please confirm that ethical approval has been granted by the lead institution to carry out this project, or that this will be granted prior to contracting with Advance HE.

Section 5: Costing and Budget

11. Please detail the schedule of all costs including a detailed breakdown of how costs will be allocated in terms of staff hours, expenses, costs associated with the branding and accessibility requirements, VAT (if applicable) etc, including any preferred variation to the payment terms. A table or spreadsheet of schedule of costs can be uploaded in the next question if required.
12. If required, this is an area to upload a schedule of costs. Please upload as a single document with the organisation and project area applying for in the document title.

Section 6: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

- 13.** Please outline the team's approach to equality and diversity and include an Equality Impact Assessment. If you wish to upload a document, you can do so at the next question. [Guidance on Equality Impact Assessment can be found here.](#)
- 14.** If required, this is an area to upload files which support the Equality Impact Assessment. Please upload as a single document with the organisation and project area applying for in the title of the document.

Section 7: Legal

- 15.** Please provide details of any claims of unlawful discrimination upheld against any member of the team by any court or employment tribunal in the last three years.
- 16.** Please provide details of any outstanding claims of litigation against the any member of the Team.
- 17.** Please provide details of the lead organisation's (if a consortium) insurer, the policy numbers, extent of cover, and expiry dates in respect of public liability and professional indemnity insurance. Copies of the policy may be required for successful teams.

Section 8: Any Other Information

- 18.** Please add any other details, links or information you would like considered with your application.

Appendix B

Scores can be awarded as a 0.5 (eg 0.5, 1.5, 2.5)	0	1	2	3
Relevant experience of team members in the fields of governance, culture and organisational transformation, and/or equality, diversity and inclusion	The application demonstrates little or no relevant experience or research credibility	The application demonstrates some-what developed relevant experience or research credibility	The application demonstrates developed relevant experience or research credibility	The application demonstrates well developed relevant experience or research credibility
Understanding of the context, challenges and development of diversity in Boards in HE and research institutes	The application demonstrates little or no understanding of the context, challenges and development of diversity in Boards	The application demonstrates some-what developed understanding of the context, challenges and development of diversity in Boards	The application demonstrates developed understanding of the context, challenges and development of diversity in Boards	The application demonstrates well developed understanding of the context, challenges and development of diversity in Boards
Appropriateness of the proposed methodology in terms of securing credible and robust research including considerations for delivering in Covid-19 effected environment	The application demonstrates little or no credible and robust research methodology	The application demonstrates some-what developed credible and robust research methodology	The application demonstrates developed credible and robust research methodology	The application demonstrates well developed credible and robust research methodology

Feasibility of completing the proposed programme of work to a high quality within the specific timetable	The application demonstrates little or no ability to complete the programme of work to a high quality within the specific timetable	The application demonstrates some ability to complete the programme of work to a high quality within the specific timetable	The application demonstrates developed plans to complete the programme of work to a high quality within the specific timetable	The application demonstrates well developed plans to complete the programme of work to a high quality within the specific timetable
Understanding of the need to work closely with Advance HE throughout the project	The application demonstrates little or no understanding of the need to work closely with Advance HE throughout the project	The application demonstrates some-what developed understanding of the need to work closely with Advance HE throughout the project	The application demonstrates developed understanding of the need to work closely with Advance HE throughout the project	The application demonstrates well developed understanding of the need to work closely with Advance HE throughout the project
Risk mitigation	The application demonstrates little or no risk mitigation	The application demonstrates some-what developed risk mitigation	The application demonstrates developed risk mitigation	The application demonstrates well developed risk mitigation
Overall value for money	The application demonstrates little or no overall value for money	The application demonstrates some-what developed overall value for money	The application demonstrates developed overall value for money	The application demonstrates well developed overall value for money

Comment on the ability of the methodology to meet the research areas:

1. The institutional context so that the relevance of the approach and learnings can be understood and evaluated
2. The drivers for the change
3. The desired outcomes for the change – what was the vision for success?
4. The aims and approach. This should include:

- a. Who lead this action/intervention in the institution?
 - b. If and how the institution collected and used data on inclusive culture, what type of data was used, including quantitative and qualitative data and what were the drivers for the choices that were made?
 - c. How did the institution engage all stakeholders and at what points in the process?
 - d. Which models or frameworks, if any, were used to help manage the transformation?
 - e. What approaches had the most success in engaging diverse groups of stakeholders?
 - f. What resources/guidance/advice were made use of?
 - g. Did the institution engage external support?
 - h. Which methods have borne results in achieving greater success in embedding a more inclusive culture?
-



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Advance HE helps HE and research be the best they can be.

We are a member-led, sector-owned charity that works with institutions and higher education across the world to improve higher education for staff, students and society. We are experts in higher education with a particular focus on enhancing teaching and learning, effective governance, leadership development and tackling inequalities through our equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) work.

Our strategic goals to enhance confidence and trust in HE, address systemic inequalities and advance education to meet the evolving needs of students and society, support the work of our members and the HE sector. We deliver our support through professional development programmes and events, Fellowships, awards, student surveys and research, providing strategic change and consultancy services and through membership (including accreditation of teaching and learning, equality charters, knowledge and resources).

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