

2023 EDI Report

Shortened summary

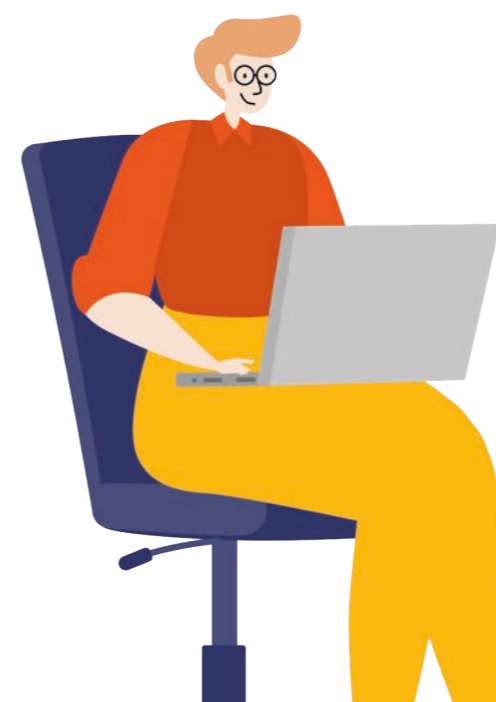


February 2024



Welcome to our 2023 Annual EDI report!

Every year we said we would let you know how we are getting on with our EDI journey. And share some of the amazing things we have done!





Shortened summary report

Understanding our diversity

We have made sure we ask about your sensitive personal information using a standard set of questions. We have also started to ask more people for this information. This will help us to look at the diversity of the people who engage with us. But also understand if there are groups of people or communities we still aren't reaching and supporting.

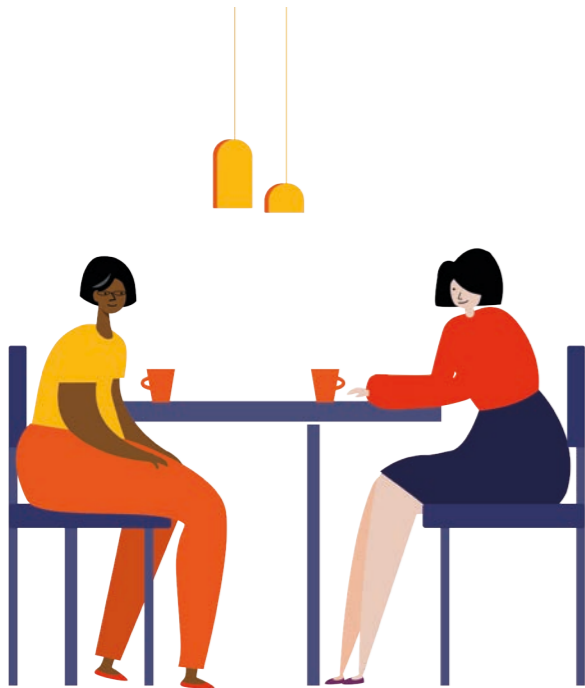
Engaging our community

We know we need to do better to engage with currently underserved and under-represented communities. This year we have organised events to build relationships and engagement with marginalised communities. We have organised a research event and an information / listening event, both aimed at the Black community. We received very positive feedback for both events, and we have also learnt a lot. We have been sharing the feedback from these events across the organisation to help people plan more events in the future.

In Wales, we launched our Breathing Space project which aims to support unpaid carers who support people living with MS. The project will deliver short breaks and activities as well as peer information and support.

Helping you grow your community

This year we have been thinking of ways to support you to 'Grow your Community'. We launched a pilot to help people set up communities around shared interests. The pilot went really well and we had lots of very positive feedback. We are building on the feedback we received and upgrading the functions to support this. We are excited to be looking to fully launch in 2024.



Supporting Inclusion

This year our EDI champions developed our equality impact assessment. This is a tool to allow us to understand the impact of our work on people. Essentially a risk assessment to make sure we are not disadvantaging, discriminating or excluding people across the protected characteristics. It will help us to become more inclusive.

This year we are a Stonewall Diversity Champion. This will help us to become an LGBTQ+ inclusive organisation. As part of this partnership colleagues have been accepted onto the Stonewall LGBTQ+ leaders programme. We have learnt how to create a trans inclusive workplace and we have reviewed our policies to make sure they are inclusive.



Standing with our community and sharing stories

This year we have continued to share stories from across our community and have marked days and months that are important for our community. We marched in London Pride and stood together against transphobia. We attended our first ever UK Black Pride. We shared stories of and celebrated inspiring Black women from our community, from our colleagues and from science and research. We have showcased the stories of researchers from diverse groups and highlighted inclusive research that's being undertaken by our MS researchers.

Support

We have developed some checklists and guidance to help people. From considering the accessibility of venues to providing tips on how to ensure everyone can take part in your event, to an EDI glossary so that everyone can be confident of the terms individuals may use to describe themselves. The checklists have already been used for many MS Society events including for MS Frontiers 2024 and the glossary has been used by teams to ensure we use inclusive language.

Understanding our progress

This year we have started our EDI audit. This will help us understand more about the impact of our EDI work and where there are areas which need focus in 2024. It will also help us shape our EDI work moving forward. Thank you to everyone who has taken part in the audit so far.

How are we doing?

We asked members of our EDI reference group to tell us how they thought we had done this year. This is a group of people living with MS who help support and guide our EDI work.

Trishna Bharadia (EDI Reference Group Member, MS Society Ambassador and Asian MS Committee Member) said,

“It’s been great this year that the EDI reference group has expanded to include more members because it’s meant more diverse voices are being represented in the MS Society’s EDI work. It’s not only about helping the MS Society, but I also learn loads from other group members too!”

Dean Owens-Cooper BA Hons, MCIPD (He/Him) said,

“I am Dean I sit on the EDI reference group for the MS Society. EDI remains important to us at the MS Society and will continue to do so. As a gay man living with MS I am proud to say over the last 12 months we have achieved a good amount of work. I think for 2024 my advice to the MS Society is to pay particular focus on the protected characteristic (Disabled). The reason for this priority is, as the MS Society is a disability charity and the population it serves are largely disabled. The MS Society should therefore maintain a strong focus on this.”

What are we going to do in 2024?

Review our digital accessibility internally and define our accessibility standards

Reflect on the outcome of the EDI audit and build on recommendations to refocus our work for 2024 and beyond.

Collect more data to help us understand the diversity of the MS community and the people who engage with us.

Continue to pilot ways to reach marginalised and under-represented groups within the MS community.

Become a more visible ally to marginalised communities.



**We always like to hear from you.
If you have any questions about
our EDI work or would like to get
involved please get in touch.**

edi@mssociety.org.uk



We're the MS Society.

Our community is here for you through the highs, lows and everything in between. We understand what life's like with MS.

Together, we are strong enough to stop MS.

mssociety.org.uk

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Registered charity in England and Wales number 1139257

And in Scotland registered charity number SC041990.

Registered as a limited company in England and Wales (07451571)