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Integrating an ED&I Strategy at the Met Office

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Diverse perspectives combined with an inclusive culture where people can bring their authentic selves to work, stimulates innovation, improves decision making and leads to greater performance and resilience. In the past, colleagues at the Met Office have set up excellent staff-led initiatives, which over the last year have been built on to deliver a coordinated institutional wide approach and instil a sustainable culture change. The Met Office has created a comprehensive Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (ED&I) Strategy to address how the organisation will lead and invest in our people and culture to make the Met Office a great place to work for all. We are publishing equality objectives to publicly demonstrate our commitment and focus to enhance ED&I:

- engaging with and understanding the diversity of our people,
- advancing equality of opportunity,
- increasing representation of under-represented groups at all levels,
- zero tolerance to bullying, harassment and discrimination.

To fulfil these objectives our actions include using comprehensive staff surveys, data collection, Equality Impact Assessments, an ongoing review of recruitment and progression practices and seeking external accreditations. As an organisation, we have employed specialist consultants with ED&I sector knowledge to help us implement these actions. A programme of extensive internal communications has shared activities, experiences and new initiatives to engage all staff.

We outline the joined-up structures that we are delivering to fulfil our strategy, which has ultimate oversight by the top levels of our organisation. However, it engages all staff with the Strategy in their day-to-day work and through a new Ally Community and a Diversity Council comprising staff representation from all existing staff-led ED&I networks. An example staff network of focus is the Women in Climate network, a joint network with the University of Exeter to support the retention of women in weather and climate science and promote diversity whilst fostering cross-institutional support, idea-sharing and networking. Other Met Office staff led networks include the Black and Asian Minority Ethnic (BAME), LGBTQ+, Autism, Internationals in the UK, Accessibility and Disability, Menopause, Dementia/Carer and Mental Health and Wellbeing Awareness networks. The Met Office also has a team of Dignity and Respect at Work advisors and encourages young people from a range of backgrounds to consider STEM careers through outreach in schools and Science Camps. We present our strategy as a model for best practise for other geoscience organisations, whilst highlighting some of the challenges that we have faced and how we are working to overcome

them.