



ANNUAL REVIEW

PROGRESS REPORT

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SUMMARY

One of the key objectives for Scotland has to be making Scotland's space sector more inclusive and diverse. This will be achieved by removing barriers to entry, promoting understanding and encouraging participation. This issue is of course, closely linked to the skills sector and Higher Education.

Initiatives designed to target the young must be inspirational, engaging and promote diversity and inclusivity - space is for all and the UK sector needs as much help as it can find to achieve and surpass growth targets. The core principle here is to ensure that no young person thinks that a job in the space sector is out of reach or difficult to enter due to discrimination. When considering the challenges of diversity and inclusivity it is important to think of these terms in their broadest sense. In doing so, we must take into account not only the nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation)[11] but also regional dimensions, neurodiversity, caregiving responsibilities, educational attainment, access to opportunities, access to role models as well as socio-economic factors [12].

Inspiring the next generation is of paramount importance as this is where the future of the space industry lies and not just in Scotland but the whole of the UK. One great example of such initiatives that is directly applicable to this report is the NewVoices initiative started by the SSLC and announced at the UKSA's Space2Connect 2021. This valuable project aims to promote inclusivity and diversity throughout the sector by sharing individual success stories and promoting the 'strength through diversity' message via a variety of online platforms such as a website, podcast and virtual events.



EDI STRATEGY FOR UKSPACE

1. INTRODUCTION

The Prosperity from Space strategy has already set out a vision for enhanced growth in the UK space sector over the next decade. Published by the Space Growth Partnership on Friday 11 May 2018 (<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-space-industry-sets-out-vision-for-growth>), the strategy focuses on four sector priorities:

1. Earth information services including navigation, analytics and security
2. Connectivity services – global connectivity anywhere from any device
3. In-space robotics – for science enterprise, consumers
4. Low-cost access to space

The strategy aims to double the value of space to wider industrial activities from £250 billion to £500 billion, generate an extra £5 billion in exports and attract £3 billion of inward investment. The space sector will actively encourage diversity and inclusion in its workforce and interact with 1 million young people per year in a bid to increase interest in careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM).

In 2018 about 13.8% of the UK population was from a minority ethnic background with London having 40% of its population from the Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic (BAME) background. (<https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/>).

Facts and figures:

1. Space sector productivity is nearly three times the national average, with a skilled workforce creating £140,000 of value per person
2. Year-on-year growth is five times greater than the wider economy since 1999
3. £415m has been invested by industry in research and development in 2014-15 alone
4. 36.4% of turnover is generated by exports
5. The space sector has tripled in value since 2000

Even with the above figures, the UK space sector is in a nascent phase providing us with the perfect opportunity to enhance growth by tapping into untapped potential in the UK.

There are currently no diversity data in the UK Space Sector; Ethnic diversity in the public sector data can be seen at <https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk/summaries/public-sector-workforces> and it can be observed that between 2014 and 2018, there has been no significant change.

The Covid-19 pandemic has also uncovered in stark relief the various structural inequalities that exist in our society, especially the lack of or inefficiency of current workplace policies and structures to support workforce who are vulnerable to events such as this. In order to tackle this, an important goal is to address underrepresentation in businesses, as well as academia, within the UK Space environment, ensuring that we have enough voices from various communities driving sustainable change forward.

2. DIVERSITY AND INNOVATION

“Innovation equals survival.”

It’s well documented that in this age of widespread disruption, companies, countries and in general societies must innovate continuously, in order to avoid stagnation. As part of a study conducted by [Accenture](#), “it was calculated that global gross domestic product would increase by up to US\$8 trillion by 2028 if innovation mindset in all countries were raised by 10 percent. No matter who or where they are, if people feel a sense of belonging and are valued by their employers for their unique contributions, perspectives and circumstances, they are empowered to innovate more.” Employees experience inclusion at work when they feel valued, trusted, authentic, and psychologically safe [[Catalyst.Org](#)] in spite of and because of their varied perspectives and backgrounds.

Numerous research and studies have established that employees in the most equal cultures see fewer barriers to innovating, starting with an appetite for taking on risks and challenges since they are less afraid to fail. An innovative company celebrates everybody’s unique ideas, perspectives, and style while making sure to provide support systems which work to remove systemic limitations, bringing everyone to the same level for ease of access to opportunities.

At this time, boosting equality, diversity and inclusion in business innovation is more important than ever. With this in mind, gathering the right data is crucial.. However, this is only part of the puzzle, as we must all work together to interpret the data correctly and implement structural changes and policies until diversity becomes a sustainable mindset.

3. NEW VOICES IN SPACE

As part of improving Equality, Diversity and Inclusion impact in the UK Space Sector, SSLC has instituted the New Voices in Space (NVIS) working group. Working closely with the rest of SSLC and relevant other organisations within the UK space ecosystem, the group will work to promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the sector, engaging with improving understanding of structures that promote exclusion, and working efficiently with a view towards removing them.

At New Voices in Space, a broad definition of diversity takes into account the nine [protected characteristics](#) in the [Equality Act 2010](#) plus regional dimensions, neurodiversity, caregiving responsibilities, educational attainment, access to opportunities, access to role models, as well as socio-economic factors.

To drive these forward, three pillars are identified [[Accenture](#)]

1. An Empowering Environment (one that trusts employees, respects individuals and offers freedom to be creative and to train and work flexibly),
2. Bold Leadership (a diverse leadership team that sets, shares and measures equality targets openly),
3. Comprehensive Action (policies and practices that are family-friendly, support all genders and are bias free in attracting and retaining people).

4. SPACE AGENDA

NVIS will have the following agenda to feed into the overall EDI initiatives within the UK space and tech sector.

4. Call for Ideas and Nation-Wide competitions: Since a diversity of minds leads to a diversity of ideas and hence statistically more chances of innovation, our proposed solution is to throw open a call for ideas for the UK space sector to its most innovative minds – students and the diversity in this demographic.

5. Collaborations with Existing EDI initiatives for panels on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion.
6. Conferences with a focus on showcasing and highlighting diverse voices and innovation & research stemming from the diversity of work - which might otherwise be overlooked.
7. A robust outreach program to schools, communities and universities.
8. Research and Publish guidelines/articles on evidence based usage of inclusive language, inclusive posters, as well as workshops aimed at reducing bias and increasing workplace awareness.
9. Planned Activities:
10. The New Voices website and landing page will be used to collect and make accessible opportunities and resources for career progression and reducing barriers for marginalised communities and demographics for entering into the Space Sector.
11. The New Voices podcast is in the process of launch – the podcast aims to invite, interview and promote innovations and knowledge driven forward due to diversity and inclusion in order to increase visibility of voices beyond traditional representation.
12. The New Voices Newsletter, currently in the design stage, aims to send out a monthly summary of news, profiles of leaders, changemakers and innovators, and a capsule of opportunities and resources for free to subscribers inboxes.
13. The NVIS, as part of SSLC, is also participating in international conferences such as the Women In Space Conference to spread the message.

5. RESOURCES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY:

- a. <https://ktn-uk.org/news/guidance-on-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-edi-questions-at-innovate-uk/>
- b. <https://innovateuk.blog.gov.uk/2020/07/02/the-power-of-diversity-data/>
- c. https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/cross-cutting-issues/gender_en.htm
- d. https://www.accenture.com/_acnmedia/thought-leadership-assets/pdf/accenture-equality-equals-innovation-gender-equality-research-report-iwd-2019.pdf
- e. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/economy/news/2007/01/26/2523/diversity-powers-innovation/>
- f. <https://www.scu.edu/ethics/all-about-ethics/the-science-of-diversity-and-inclusion-initiatives-sparking-transformative-solutions/>
- g. <https://www.scu.edu/ethics/focus-areas/business-ethics/programs/workplace-diversity-dialogues/>
- h. <https://www.catalyst.org/research/why-diversity-and-inclusion-matter/>
- i. http://images.forbes.com/forbesinsights/StudyPDFs/Innovation_Through_Diversity.pdf
- j. <https://santafe.edu/pages/diversity>