

Diversity in recruitment – update

January 2021

In November, the team published an article on the importance of diversity, and made changes to our recruitment process for our PhD Placement Programme. Since then, we've had further discussions with two experts at one of our Partner Universities. [Marie Juanchich](#) and [Daniel Jolles](#), from the University of Essex spoke to us about some changes we could make to recruitment processes for our permanent staff.

We are currently [recruiting](#) for two senior policy advisors, with a closing deadline of the 11th January 2022. We have made several changes, within Civil Service HR guidelines, to make the process more inclusive.

Defining diversity

People often talk about diversity, but rarely define it. We decided to highlight groups which have historically been under-represented in the Civil Service. This includes disabled applications, and those from BAME or lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

Encouraging candidates from under-represented to contact the vacancy manager

This is an unwritten rule, where for more senior roles, applicants are expected to contact the vacancy manager. We've explicitly encouraged staff from under-represented backgrounds to contact the vacancy manager if they want to find out more about the role.

An online information session

Even with encouragement, some people might not feel confident in contacting the vacancy manager, so we wanted to run an open session that anyone could join to find out more about the role and team. We had lots of people attend and ask useful questions that everyone could learn from. We [recorded](#) this session for those who could not attend.

Increased outreach

We've made an effort to build on previous efforts by sharing our advert with several departmental networks, as well as the cross-government Civil Service Race Forum Network, to attract as diverse a candidate pool as possible. We also produced a [short video](#), where one of our Deputy Heads of team talks about the role, so that this could be more easily shared and engaged with.

Changes to sifting

Once all the applications are in, we intend to score each response by question and not by individual. This helps reduce the risk of building up an idea of a candidate from one response and start to score subsequent sections differently.

We're always open to more ideas, so please contact us at team@openinnovation.gov.uk if you have any thoughts on how we can make the process even more inclusive. If you're interested in applying, you can find the job description and application portal [here](#).