

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for Research Managers

Did you know that....



Did you know that.... The Research Manager (RM) role has been so broadly defined that it has included administration, leadership, research support, grant and funding seeking, group representation and not once business travel. That's right, the 855 respondents to the Cardea survey who were asked about the role of the RM answered in so many ways that it was difficult to define their responsibilities precisely. And yet 855 people identified themselves as RMs. So, what is the role of the RM?

At the same time, because of the administrative part of the job, it was seen as a more 'feminine' form of work. In fact, 73% of RMs identify themselves as women.

In addition, the role is often seen as involving mobility and group management, so that only 9% of those employed in the RM role are disabled, according to the respondents. According to the results of the survey, men and people without a disability enjoy a higher level of well-being than women and people with a disability.

According to respondents in all countries, RMs are most likely to work in large organisations, managing groups of around 15 people on average.

Research Managers want to be respected, valued and acknowledged, not only in research environments but also by society. According to survey results, the high rate of women working in this role and the worryingly low level of professional esteem should convey the urgency to recognise the work of Research Managers. This should happen nationally and internationally via formal recognition from employers and changes at organisational and policy levels.

The Cardea project is trying to balance the roles of RM in Europe and give it a definition and a path forward. However, this will not be possible if we do not take EDI into account.



Equality, Diversity and Inclusion for Research Managers

As managers, RMs are responsible for their research (team) and the working environment. However, they will not be good leaders without knowledge of EDI. Creating an inclusive and diverse research environment is crucial for driving innovation, collaboration, and excellence. The role of Research Managers in championing Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) is vital.



The profiles apply to all research managers, regardless of whether they are in the private or public sector (e.g., large companies, NGOs, SME research institutes, research universities, or research hospitals). Despite any particular profession or specialisation of research managers, broad profiles can be outlined that describe the different characteristics of research manager roles, including the level of responsibility.

The Cardea team will provide concise and accessible information on crucial EDI issues to support efforts to foster an inclusive culture, not only for the role of the research manager but also to assist research managers in promoting and implementing EDI policies in their own organisations and countries

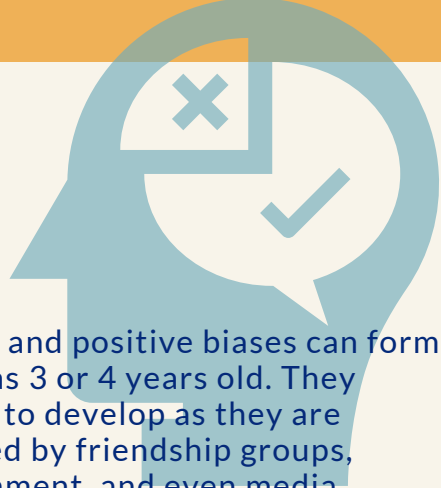
Unconscious Bias

The term unconscious bias (Bias literally means prejudice. Unconscious means being unaware) refers to an involuntary negative attitude towards a person or group or an involuntary positive preference for them. Although we all tend to think of ourselves as ethical, impartial, and fair-minded, we are more biased than we think.

Stereotypes arise when we have general knowledge about a group of people, and prejudices arise when we attribute certain general characteristics of that group to each member. With each prejudice, we draw conclusions that make accepting or rejecting a group easier.

Our brains receive up to 11 million pieces of information every second. So, bias is nature's way of making sense of overwhelming amounts of data to get us safely through the day.

While we can't be responsible for the involuntary way our brains categorise information, we can be aware that unconscious bias exists. The good news is that once you are aware of your unconscious biases, you can take steps to reduce their impact. By taking small steps, such as improving your template for hiring questions and encouraging cross-functional collaboration, you can help create a more diverse and inclusive workplace for yourself and your team.



Negative and positive biases can form as early as 3 or 4 years old. They continue to develop as they are reinforced by friendship groups, entertainment, and even media reports. Some of our prejudices can even become deep-seated.



➤ **Youth Equals Strength** - Ask any young person, and they will surely tell you that older people tend to be not very strong.

➤ **Young People Are Good With Technology** - Many youths assume that older people, like their parents, for example, have no clue how to use the latest technology.

➤ **Biases Against Powerful Women** - when it comes to leadership style, being hard-driving and demanding have often been considered the hallmarks of excellent leadership. Unfortunately, when a female exhibits those same attributes, they don't get the same credit. They can be defined as "difficult" or another term that starts with the letter "B".

Inclusive Language

Inclusive language is

- Language that is free of prejudice, stereotypes and allusions to irrelevant details.
- non-discriminatory language that celebrates the positive qualities of people - regardless of their gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, social background, religion or belief.
- Language that does not perpetuate stereotypical ideas about gender roles.

Inclusive language is not the same as being politically correct.

Political correctness focuses on not offending, whereas inclusive language focuses on honouring people's identities. While both inclusive language and political correctness acknowledge that there are certain things you should not say, political correctness can create discomfort that prevents people from engaging.

Inclusive language, on the other hand, allows for more flexibility and connection. It focuses on education, dialogue and referring to people according to their personal identities. Inclusive language is all about making others feel heard, honoured, and respected.

There are six primary rules for inclusive language:

1. Put people first.
2. Use universal phrases.
3. Recognise the impact of mental health language.
4. Use genderless language.
5. Be thoughtful about imagery you use.
6. Ask if you aren't sure.



- Using the phrase “everyone” instead of “guys” when referring to a group of people
- Saying “a person with a disability” rather than “a disabled person” in order to ensure their identity isn't defined entirely by their disability.
- Using the pronouns “they/them” for a person who identifies as non-binary.
- Using the modern phrase “autism spectrum” rather than “Asperger's” to refer to a person on the autism spectrum.

Accessible Communication

Accessibility refers to the design of products, devices, services, or environments usable by as many people as possible, including those with disabilities. Communication means ensuring that content is accessible to everyone, regardless of their abilities.



BEST PRACTICES FOR INCORPORATING ACCESSIBILITY

- **Emphasise Accessibility from the Start:** Make accessibility a foundational principle in your communication strategy.
- **Educate and Train:** Ensure that your team understands the importance of accessibility and how to implement it.
- **Collaborate with Experts:** Engaging with accessibility experts or consulting agencies can provide valuable insights and guidance.
- **Regularly Evaluate and Update:** Continuously assess and update your content to ensure ongoing accessibility.

In an era of connectivity and interdependence, accessibility is a testament to our collective aspiration for a world where communication barriers are dismantled, and inclusivity thrives.

Key Areas of Focus in Accessible Communication:

Visual content:

- ▶ **Images and Graphics** - Provide alternative text descriptions for images and graphics. This allows screen readers to describe the content to users with visual impairments.
- ▶ **Colour Choices** - To assist those with colour vision deficiencies, consider colour contrast and avoid conveying information solely through colour
- ▶ **Video Content** - Include video captions and transcripts to ensure that deaf or hard-of-hearing users can access the information.

Written content:

- ▶ **Readable Fonts and Layouts** - Choose fonts and layouts that are easy to read, considering users with dyslexia or low vision.
- ▶ **Clear Language** - Use plain language that is easy to understand, considering users for whom English may not be their first language or those with cognitive disabilities.

Creating Inclusive Environments



Leaders and peers who make deliberate decisions and take purposeful actions, mindful of inclusion as a daily practice, create an inclusive environment.

An inclusive environment involves the deliberate effort to create a workplace environment where every employee is respected and empowered to contribute equally and be supported with access to the same resources and opportunities, regardless of individual demographics.

The most critical part of creating inclusive workplaces is practising inclusiveness daily. These micro-moments add up to create a culture of equity, inclusion, and great leadership.

What are the key elements in creating an inclusive working environment?



Open and effective communication: Creating an atmosphere that fosters open and effective communication, where all gender employees are encouraged to share their thoughts, opinions and concerns.



Zero tolerance for discrimination: Implementing a policy of zero tolerance for all forms of discrimination, including those based on race, gender, sexual orientation, age, disability or religion. Employees must be safe and protected from intolerance.



Mutual respect: Foster a culture of mutual respect and understanding. Every employee should feel that they are respected and that their opinion matters.



Open access to training and development: Ensuring equal access to professional development opportunities for all employees.



Equal opportunities, pay and transparency: Ensuring equal opportunities and equal, transparent pay for equal work, regardless of gender, race, background or other factors. Eliminating inequalities in income and promotion is crucial to creating an inclusive working environment.



Remove architectural barriers: Ensuring that the workplace is accessible to all employees, regardless of disability, by removing architectural barriers and providing appropriate facilities.



Support programmes: Creating support programmes to help male and female employees cope with challenges, including the provision of childcare, health care, psychological support, etc.

Inclusive Leadership

Although all elements of EDI apply to every RM at every level, as experience and skills increase, so do responsibilities. For example, RM3 or RM4, whose positions give them a significant voice in co-creating the business and in decision-making, become leaders and mentors not only to their team but also to other RMs around the world. RM3 and RM4 are therefore needed as leaders to ensure that EDI spreads.

But what is Conscious Inclusive Leadership?

A lack of diversity and unfamiliarity with the importance of inclusion can unintentionally lead managers and leaders to create a hostile workplace. Even actions like using gendered, heteronormative language in onboarding packets or hosting all-male panels are contributing to the problem of an unwelcome company environment.

Policies themselves don't institute an inclusive environment. A survey done by Harvard Business Review found that 75% of respondents do not feel the effect of diversity policies without a commitment from leadership to enact change.

Leading inclusively makes employees and customers feel accepted, boosts company revenue, and improves workplace satisfaction. Most importantly, it amplifies employee voices that otherwise may not be heard.

Inclusive leaders share a cluster of six signature traits:

- ▶ **Visible commitment:** They articulate authentic commitment to diversity, challenge the status quo, hold others accountable, and make diversity and inclusion a personal priority.
- ▶ **Humility:** They are modest about capabilities, admit mistakes, and create the space for others to contribute.
- ▶ **Awareness of bias:** They are aware of personal blind spots and flaws in the system and work hard to ensure a meritocracy.
- ▶ **Curiosity about others:** They demonstrate an open mindset and deep curiosity about others, listen without judgment, and seek empathy to understand those around them.
- ▶ **Cultural intelligence:** They are attentive to others' cultures and adapt as required.
- ▶ **Effective collaboration:** They empower others, pay attention to diversity of thinking and psychological safety, and focus on team cohesion.

Inclusive Leadership

Inclusive leaders work to get everyone on the team involved. They not only like hearing new ideas from different people but are willing to try them out. This makes for a more enjoyable workplace, as every team member feels valued and like part of the team. Diverse workplaces can lead to better businesses, but only if there are inclusive leaders at the top to encourage and implement best practices.



Inclusive leaders help their organisations in many ways, including:

- Giving a voice to everyone on the team
- Increasing employee happiness by making them feel valued
- Helping their team adapt to changes quickly
- Employees are more likely to show up to work
- Increasing efficiency by utilizing everyone's best abilities

Leaders must first demonstrate inclusive behaviors. Leaders must remember that not all employees have the same perspectives, experiences or opportunities as others within the organisation. To be inclusive, leaders must seek out and embrace these diverse perspectives.

If you want to develop your inclusive leadership style, consider the following tips:

Reflect on any biases or assumptions you have and strive to remain nonjudgmental in your interactions with others.

Remain open and positive during discussions, team meetings and conversations. Commit to approaching things at work with a positive intent to prevent or change exclusionary behaviours or processes.

Engage passive team members and motivate them to feel confident and comfortable giving input and feedback.

Create ways for your team to learn about each other's differences, cultural experiences, and perspectives to foster an inclusive environment where everyone can contribute insight and ideas.

Provide team and individual feedback to help coach your team, so they develop more inclusive behaviors and methods of working together.

Accept your personal vulnerabilities and allow others to see them. This will set an example for others to follow. Be open to admitting your mistakes, seeing your blind spots, and asking others for input.

Find a mentor or someone with more experience in managing diverse teams. As you support your team members, you should be supported in your leadership style. See out another manager or someone outside the office who you trust and emulate their inclusive leadership behaviours and skills.