

PDN Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee – June 2021



Read below what motivates the EDI Taskforce members:

Sue Jones: “For as long as I can remember I have found inequality and discrimination deeply distressing. The idea that a person might be treated differently because of their gender identity, race, age, sexual orientation, disability or social class is abhorrent to me. Being female and from a working class background I have experienced two kinds of discrimination, in some cases unintentional. The new PDN ED&I Taskforce aims to raise our awareness of the importance of diversity and equality for a healthy, thriving workplace, to ask us to examine our unconscious biases and to **do all we can to ensure everyone feels a sense of inclusion and belonging**. Please join us in this positive endeavour.”

Eva Pillai: “PDN is a very dynamic and exciting department to work in. I joined this taskforce to help PDN be a place where people feel welcome and safe as we do our awesome research and all the work that keeps the department running like a well-oiled machine. **I am particularly keen to understand our recruitment, hiring and retention processes, and building a friendly and fair environment for all!**”

Mekayla Storer: “Everybody is different. I believe that **our diversity is our greatest strength** and am committed to creating a culture that celebrates these differences in an inclusive environment.”

Martin Johnson (he/his): “I’m martin johnson, and somewhat older than most of my fellow members, which allows me to bring a different perspective to the topic of ED&I. So I am **concerned to bring the issues of age, disability and gay rights to the attention of the committee in addition to those of race and gender identity.**”

Ruby Peters “I joined the EDI taskforce at PDN to help move our excellent department forward, with a shared language and understanding around equitable decision making, and the importance of representation at PDN reflective of our

society. I am particularly interested in how we as a taskforce can **help people to feel valued and supported** throughout their time here, and how we can build on our current **recruitment and retention policies to actively foster an inclusive and diverse environment.**"

George Cronin (they/them): "I have been involved in EDI-related initiatives for most of my career and since joining PDN as part of my role as Deputy Librarian for Biological Sciences, I have been inspired by the commitment and dedication of members of this department to making it a truly **inclusive and welcoming place.** Having worked in different places where this commitment has not been as strong, I wanted to be a part of this burgeoning effort and to help wherever I can in making PDN an even greater place to study and work!"

Max Jakobs: "I joined the EDI taskforce in the summer of 2020 to learn more about the lived realities of minority people in Cambridge and what to do about it. On the taskforce **I focus on recruitment since improving the diversity in the faculty, particularly at senior levels, will likely have positive outcomes on how minority friendly a workplace is.**"

Bailey Weatherbee: "Before moving from the United States to Cambridge to start my PhD in PDN, I worked and volunteered in my local community with grassroots organizations advocating for education equity and progressive policies to uplift marginalized groups. I strongly believe in DEI work as professional field necessary to better all sects of society. I hope through the PDN taskforce we are able to bring some of these aspects to the department through **community building, perspective shifting and additions to our teachings and trainings.**"

Trish Murray (she/her): "For many years, I would conform without question. Nevertheless and altogether too often, I would experience the sharp end of an unwelcome community. I wouldn't want anybody else to experience some of the bias that I have, so I feel I have an obligation to play my part in changing how we see each other. Being able to be a part of a Taskforce like this is so important, not just for the future dynamics of the department, but for me as a BAME woman in an assistant staff role. **To see equality around us, we need to build a strong presence in the department that will help lay the foundations for better methods of practice for us now, and for the future.**"

Sarah Rowland-Jones "I am very pleased to part of the ED&I taskforce at PDN in my new role as Chief HR Administrator. I hope to be able to assist in facilitating cohesive standards, guidance and communication across the different HR-related activities to **help us all actively recognise and work on issues of equality diversion and inclusion** together as a department."

Jolie Zhou: "I joined the ED&I task force because **I value voices and actions against all forms of discrimination and prejudice.** I would like to contribute to the team's efforts in turning the stated commitment to valuing equality, diversity and promoting inclusion into concrete action."

Alice Knapton: "I'm Alice, a first year PhD student in Physiology. When I heard about the task-force I was very keen to join as I feel very strongly about equality,

diversity, and inclusion. I hope that as part of this team I will contribute to making PDN a welcoming environment for everyone.”

Goli Kolahgar (she/her): “I value the rich multicultural environment of the University and PDN and want to make sure everyone feels valued and respected in the department. Within the group, I am especially keen to implement changes that will promote a sense of belonging for all PDN members.”

Andrea Dimitracopoulos: “Hello, I am Andrea, a postdoc in the Franze Lab. I am an active of the PDN Wellbeing Committee, have been on the University of Cambridge Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team, and recently joined the PDN EDI taskforce. I am a strong believer that EDI values are the foundation on which to build a stimulating, enjoyable, and productive workplace, as well as a positive and supportive community. As part of the taskforce, I look forward to working on building a more diverse and inclusive academic community and culture both at the level of recruitment and hiring, and at the level of undergraduate teaching.”