

10 YEARS OF EDI

The highs and the lows!

Dr Sheila Kanani (she/her) - HerPlaceForSpace - PAERI conference 2024

New Book Coming Soon! Can You Get Music on the Moon?

HER PLACE FOR SPACE

SPACE EDUCATION EDI BOOKS MORE

EDUCATION | ENGAGEMENT | EDI

I'M A SPACE EDUCATOR, AUTHOR,
AND EDI CONSULTANT.





Royal
Astronomical
Society



My background and role at the RAS



RAS diversity and inclusion

- 1820, 1916, 2020
- Women in Astronomy group/CDAG to support Fellows
- New to me, but new to them too!
- Writing policies (safeguarding, EDI), other documentation, Code of Conduct etc.
- Lots of training, attending conferences, learning and implementing.
- One off events, partnerships, annual 'days'.
- Some surveys and analysis including membership demographics
- Some support mechanisms e.g. harassment hotline.

New initiatives

- LGBT+ physical sciences network and survey
- Celebrating Black History
- Decolonisation of resources
- Staff training annually
- Relevant articles and focus in membership magazine
- Social media campaigns

RAS

2000

Sky & Earth

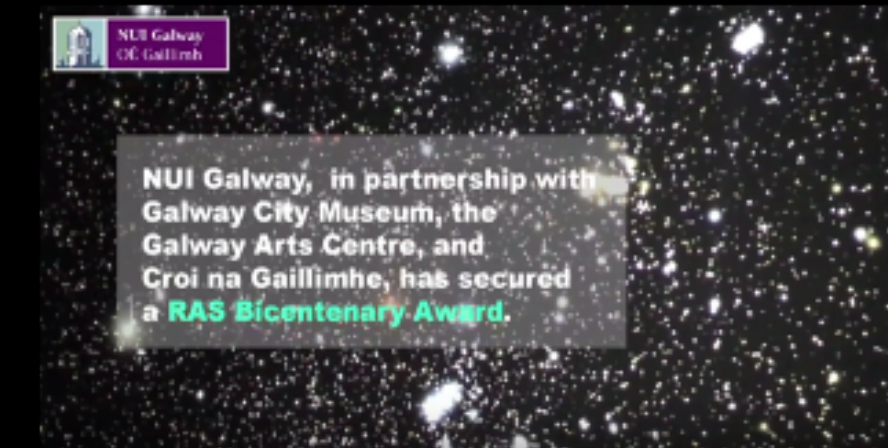
RAS200

- 2013: Society made investment of £1 million in outreach and engagement projects, to commemorate 200th anniversary in 2020
- Two rounds of funding, 2015 and 2017, projects expected to run for at least five years
- Partners to reach groups previously not well served with Astronomy and Geophysics
- All projects community-led: academics input on subject content, but methodology of delivery led by audience expert partners
- ~150 total applications

12 WINNERS

HER PLACE FOR  **SPACE**

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(Carers)



(Welsh language and culture)

**A cumulative total audience of ~220,000
directly reached by RAS200 projects between September 2015 and
December 2022 (as reported to the evaluation).**

Broad and Deep Engagement funded by RAS200

**Developing and supporting the
individual
(in-depth engagement)**

e.g. BB, C4C, Eisteddfodau (pre-festival workshops), Galway (intergenerational workshops), GG (space camps), NYA, PT, WEA

**Increasing the numbers engaging with
STEM/ STEM promotion
(breadth engagement)**

e.g. CS2C, Eisteddfodau (art displays/performances at festivals), Galway (art displays/performances), GG (national events, badge), NSCC, SAAO

Learning - Designing a Programme that Reaches the Intended Audience

- 1. Develop a clear, specific vision and purpose for each engagement programme – define WHY are you doing this, WHO you want to reach and WHAT impact (specific outcomes) you want to deliver for them.**
- 2. Fund the organisations with established audiences who match the programme’s vision and purpose, and have potential to sustain engagement post-funding.**
- 3. Allow audience expertise, rather than science, to lead activities resulting in relevant, meaningful experiences and optimising audience trust and involvement.**
- 4. Empower funded organisations to select audience-appropriate ‘local’ partners and relevant science expertise.**
- 5. Capitalise on the innate appeal and broad accessibility of astronomy to create relevant experiences for audiences.**

Legacy

- Recognise the wider outcomes that can arise through engaging with communities outside traditional reach.
- Prioritise and specify target audiences through future strategy.
- Disseminate learning to other STEM stakeholders.
- Explore potential research into this area of impact.

Bullying and Harassment

Reactive - case by case basis - Fellows coming to us.

Led to:

- New RAS website - diversity section and anonymous reporting, diversity monitoring forms attached to every application form
- Working with Prospect Union and other useful partnerships
- Case by case basis were still occurring
- Harassment and bullying survey and results:

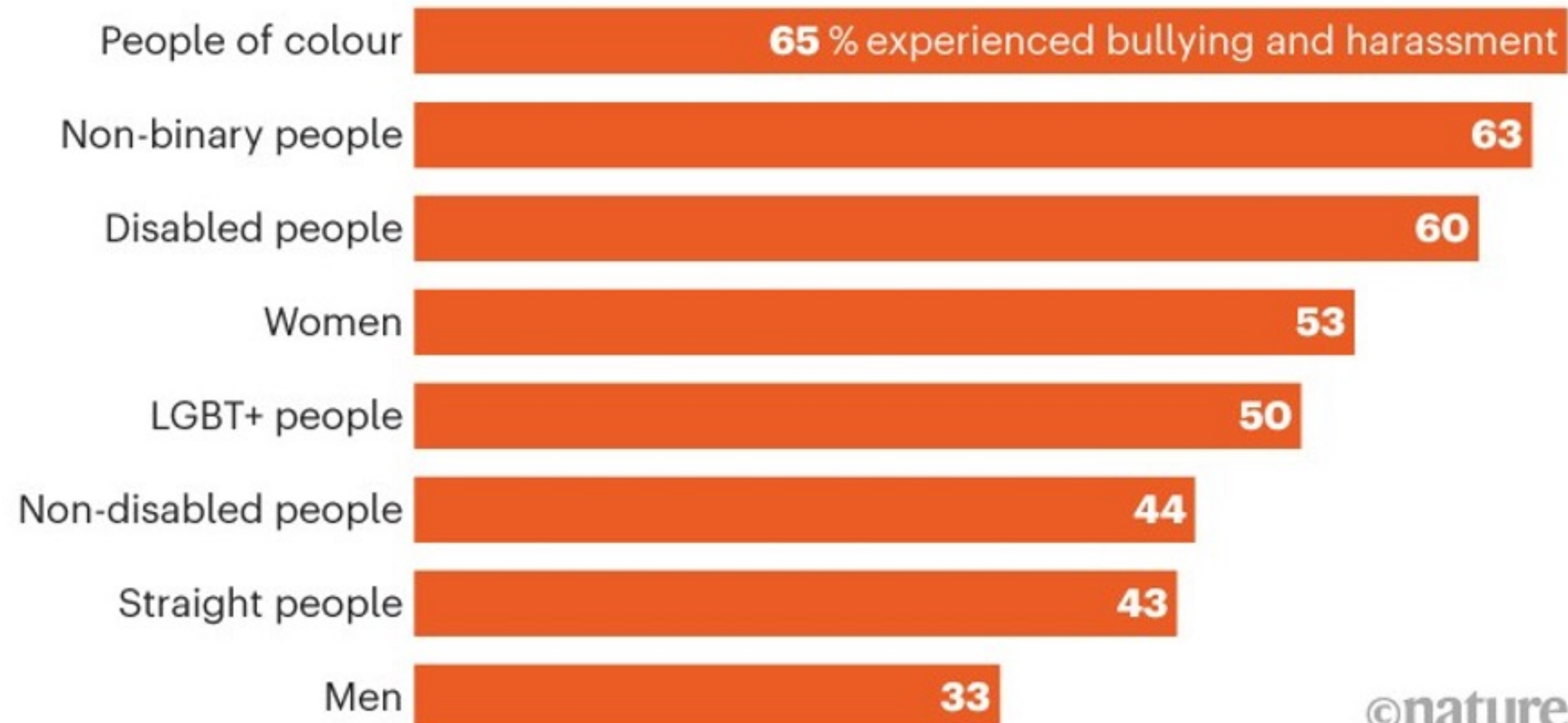
Key initial findings show:

- Disabled, and Black and minority ethnic astronomers and geophysicists are 40% more likely to be bullied than their non-disabled and White colleagues respectively.
- Women and non-binary people in the field are 50% more likely than men to be bullied and harassed.
- 50% of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer astronomers and geophysicists were bullied in the last 12 months, and 12% of bisexual astronomers reported being bullied at least once a week.

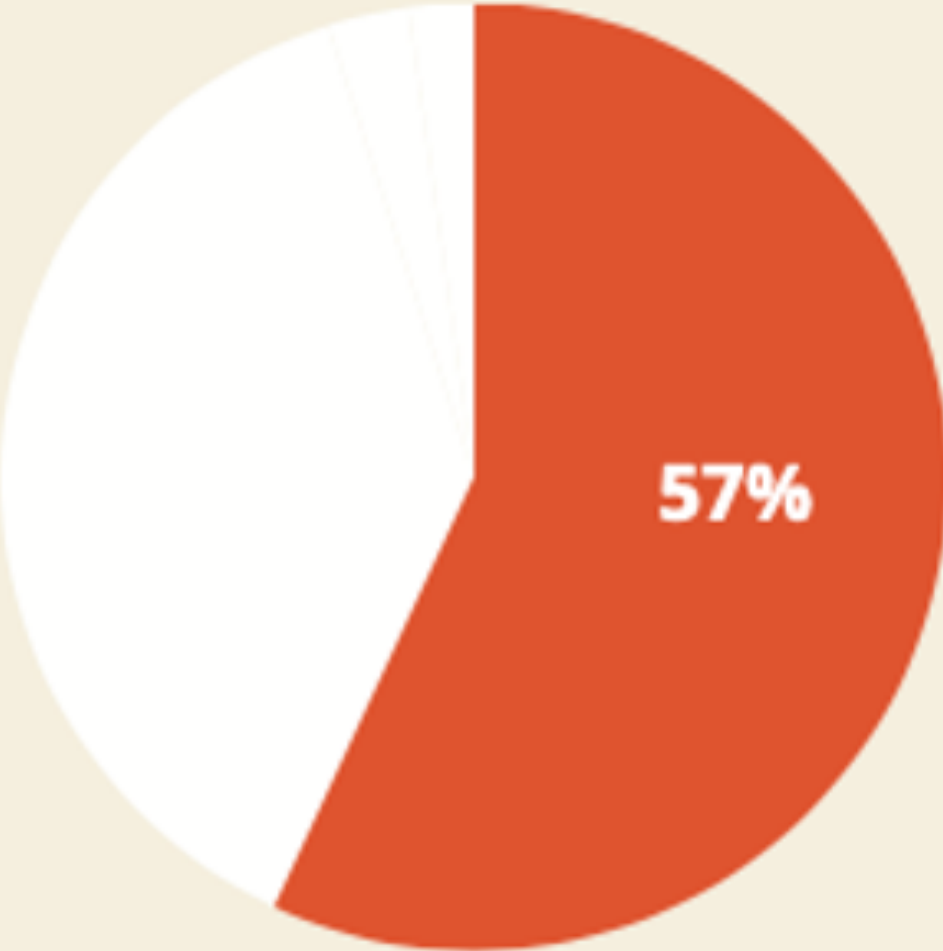
“43% had been subjected to some type of bullying and harassment in the last 12 months”

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT IN ASTRONOMY

A survey of 661 astronomers and geophysicists found that 44% of respondents had experienced bullying and harassment in the past two years — but people from certain demographics and marginalized groups reported more negative experiences than others.



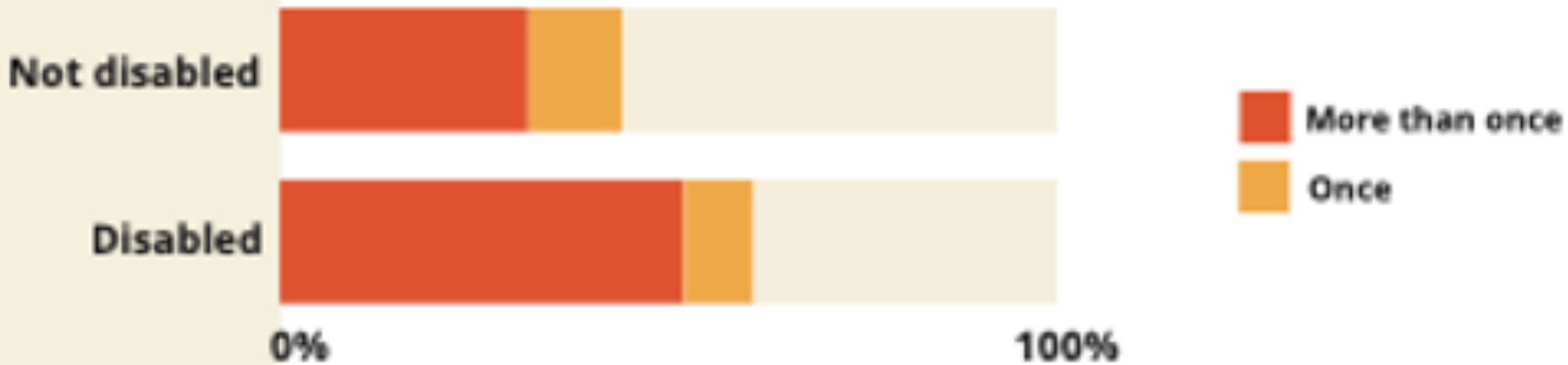
Graphical Summary



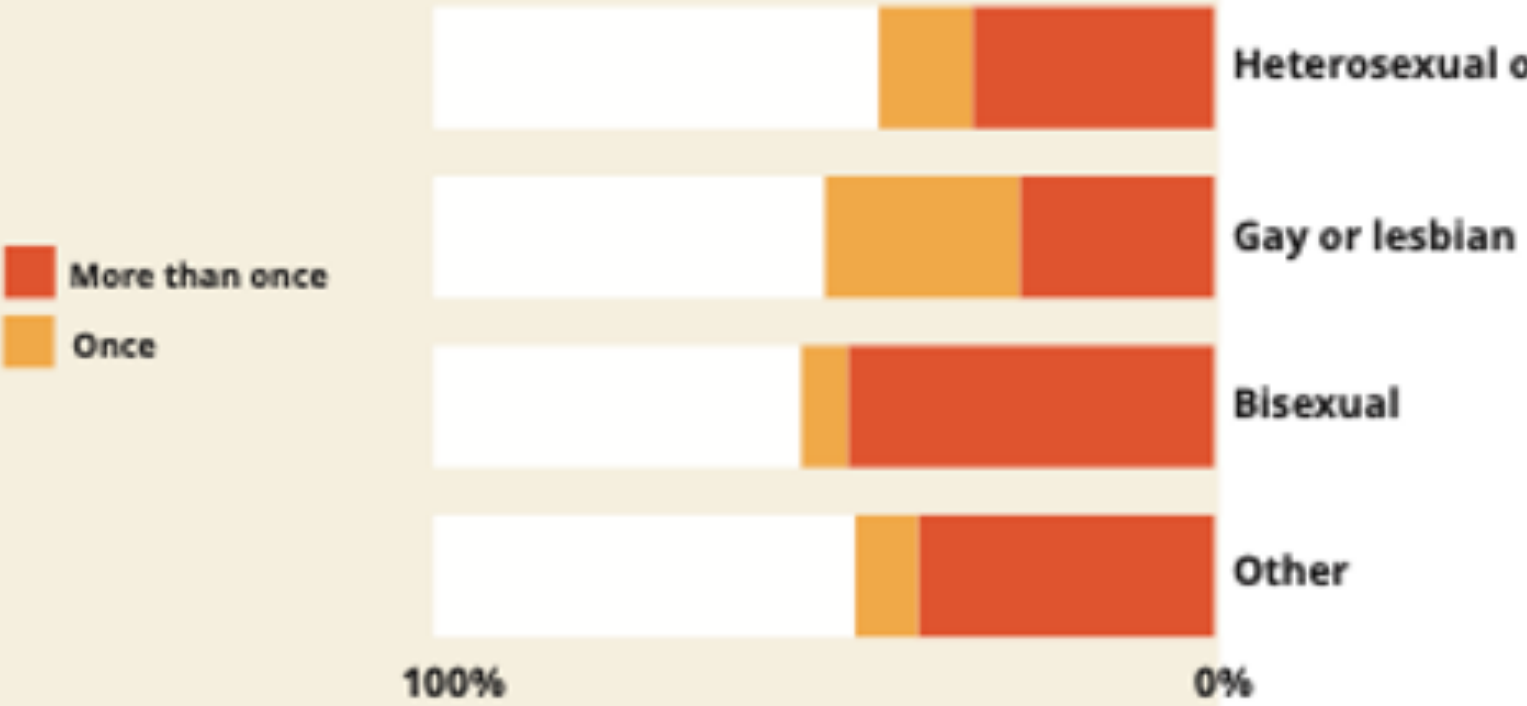
“Senior staff are not aware of the impact of their actions.”

More than half the respondents had witnessed instances of bullying, harassment and unwanted behaviours

Disabled people experienced bullying and harassment more frequently during the last 2 years



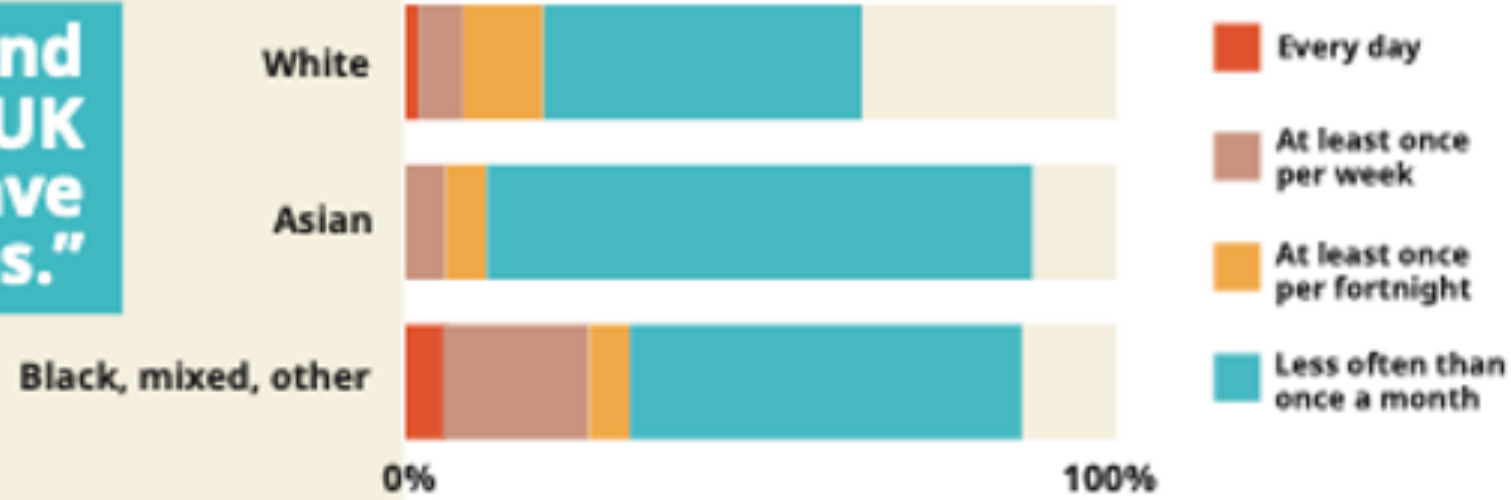
Gay, lesbian and bi people experienced more frequent incidents of bullying and harassment in the last 2 years



“One person who bullied me is on the committee in charge of upholding the code of conduct”

“Known bullies and harassers in UK astronomy have not lost their jobs.”

BAME respondents experienced more bullying and harassment in the last 12 months



Preventative measures

“Do you think your employer takes sufficient action to prevent bullying and harassment or unwanted behaviours at work?”

37% of all respondents said yes to this, 33% said no, and 27% said they were not sure (3% responded with ‘other’)

- Unclear reporting procedures at many institution
- Supervisor relationships make reporting/whistleblowing difficult
- Policies aren't there to protect staff or prevent bullying and harassment, they are there to cover organisations' backs
- Those in positions of power and influence are perceived as 'invincible' and are not punished; many perceived that there were no sanctions for those who secure large grants for their universities

Preventative measures

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- 37% of all respondents said yes to this, 33% said no, and 27% said they were not sure (3% responded with ‘other’)

“A code of conduct exists, but one of the persons who bullied me is one of the chairs of the committee in charge of upholding it”

“On paper they do, but there are always some people in more ‘powerful’ positions who don’t treat students with respect, especially those who are struggling with a disability”

“It is difficult to educate senior staff on their behaviour. Some individuals are not aware of the impact of their actions and do not believe they have done anything wrong.”

Recommendations and actions

- We created a series of recommendations that can be actioned by individuals, by managers and workplaces, and by organisations and associations.
- More explicit permission is needed to enable individuals to act, report, or disclose when harm is done. This permission is useless if those involved cannot also trust that this will be acted upon, and received with the support it requires.
- To that end these recommendations are suggestions for how we might build that sense of permission and trust, focusing on three critical areas: **prevention, reporting and accountability.**
- It is our intention that by enacting these recommendations, we can all make headway towards a safer and more inclusive workplace.

- Increase your understanding of what behaviours might be considered bullying and harassment. This might include: proactive EDI engagement, training, learning about other cultures, diversifying news and media feeds.

- Offer regular training and learning opportunities that are particularly relevant to issues faced by your staff/ membership and their managers.

- Seek any external badging of anti- B&H status offered (e.g., methods of accreditation/recognition for anti- B&H courses taken), and support team members to do the same.

- Commit to regularly reviewing that all members of the team are given equal/equivalent access to opportunities (projects, training, collaborations).

- Be prepared to learn, and to do better in the future. No-one is expected to be perfect, and mistakes will happen.

- Review membership of B&H panels (for example a panel member hearing allegations of B&H as part of a grievance or disciplinary procedure) to ensure members, are suitably impartial and properly trained to understand issues around B&H.

- If you witness any behaviour that is harmful to you directly or by association, feel empowered to report this.

- Keep up to date on your institutional reporting mechanisms. Invite HR or an external expert in to keep your team up to date.

What can RIs do?

- Use any resources you can.
- EDI role in Senior Management Team.
- Lead by example, educate senior managers.
- Actively look at workload with staff who are more likely to experience bullying.
- Actively check in with staff who are more likely to experience bullying.
- Engage views of staff and students in multiple ways.
- Support embedding inclusivity (inc. assessments, curriculum, review awarding gaps).
- Role modelling - posters representing a diversity of excellent scientists.
- Fellowship application feedback, mentors for all PGR students outside their group.
- Clear signposting - dignity at work contacts and staff with wellbeing training.
- Collect data and use it. Feedback to staff regarding cases.
- Support EDI staff to be able to present their work at meetings.
- Evaluate the EDI experience after large conferences and meetings.
- Consider self nomination without a reference for awards.
- Continue to engage with the community - seek out unheard voices.

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Thank you!

Any questions?

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