**institute of development studies**

# IDS Equity and Inclusion Review – Action Plan

## May 2023

### 1. Introduction

The Institute of Development Studies has produced this action plan in response to the Equity and Inclusion review carried out by Nous group in late 2022 and early 2023. The action plan has been created through collaboration between the IDS Board of Trustees, the Steering Group, the Equalities Champions Group, an all-staff consultation, and the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG).

The implementation of the action plan will be led by SLG and the Equalities Champions Group and overseen by the IDS Board of Trustees.

### 2. Background

The IDS strategy sets out our ambitions for a more equitable and sustainable world, where people everywhere can live their lives free from poverty and injustice. One of our five strategic aims is to create a sustainable, resilient and equitable institution.

IDS is committed to eliminating discrimination and to embedding and supporting equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) among our workforce, in our work and in all our activities. Promoting a culture of equity, diversity and inclusion is central to our values and vital to our success. We expect people to behave always in a way that is in-keeping with our values – of respectfulness and inclusivity, as well as excellence and resourcefulness.

Arising from discussions across multiple groups at IDS, including the Equalities Champions Group, the Decolonising Group, and SLG, the Board of Trustees committed to undertaking an external review of Equity and Inclusion at IDS. The Nous group was appointed to undertake the review.

The review considered the differential experiences of staff at IDS across intersecting protected characteristics, with a focus on race and whiteness, while attending to questions and relations of power including in relation to other characteristics such as educational background.

SLG strongly welcomes the report. The report highlights many positives and SLG is pleased to see the recognition of the strong commitment to EDI and IDS values. SLG acknowledges and accepts the findings and recognise that the most pressing issues

identified by Nous are difficult and ongoing. The report presents a series of helpful recommendations for action in each of the key finding areas identified, recognising that the issues are interconnected, and action in one area will also have positive impacts in other areas.

The finding of bullying behaviour by a minority of senior academics is uncomfortable and SLG believes this provides the mandate to develop a zero-tolerance culture. The report may help people to reflect, understand and categorise their own behaviours and actions differently in line with the lived experience of the respondents and the values and ethos of the organisation.

Implementing the recommendations will continue to help us improve equity and diversity at IDS and create spaces for discussion of these challenging issues.

Whilst this review has focused on IDS staff, the learning and recommendations will have positive and beneficial implication for students and partners. IDS will continue to monitor these areas and develop this action plan as necessary as part of our commitment to excellence in teaching and equitable partnerships.

### 3. The IDS Action Plan to address the Nous recommendations

The recommendations are laid out in detail in the full report from Nous and summarised in the first column of the table below alongside the agreed IDS timescale and actions.

**Table 1**

| High level Nous recommendation | Timeframe | Actions |
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| 1. Provide transparency on the outcomes of this review and the actions IDS will take forward. | Within the next 3 months | • Nous, the Board of Trustees and the Steering Group will present the findings to all staff, at an all-staff meeting on the 20th of April, followed by discussion of recommendations. An action plan will then be co-created with all staff before being agreed and published. (completed)<br><br>• Following the presentation to staff, the report will be made public on the IDS website, accompanied by statements from the Director and the Board confirming commitment to act on the recommendations. (completed) |
| 2. Continue to consider IDS' position and identity as a | Ongoing in preparation for the new | • We will hold discussions as part of the strategy midpoint review, around equitable partnering, and IDS international initiatives. |

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| | British vs global institute to ensure that it can operate most effectively externally and internally to achieve its goals. | Strategic Plan post 2025 | (completed), and further work will be commissioned in preparation for the next strategy period.<br><br>• We will hold discussions on EDI on an ongoing basis including at the all staff retreat in July 2023.<br><br>• We will clarify the role of the decolonising group as an informal collective - a space for collective reflection and learning rather than an institutional initiative.<br><br>• We will have a discussion at the 2023 Retreat on the IDS approach to decolonising, defining how we can take this agenda forward in the next strategy period. |
| 3. | Strengthen accountability for EDI at senior levels to improve and maintain a respectful and inclusive culture | Within the next 12 months | • A subgroup of the Board of Trustees will be established to oversee the implementation of this proposed action plan. (completed)<br><br>• EDI will be a standing item of the Board agenda. (completed)<br><br>• SLG to take formal responsibility for EDI, supported by the Director of HR and the Equality Champions Group. (completed)<br><br>• EDI will be a standing item on the SLG agenda. (completed)<br><br>• Poor behaviour and bullying will be added to the IDS risk register. (completed)<br><br>• We will collect, monitor and report on EDI data to the Board and all staff annually, including data on exit interviews and report and support data to be shared.<br><br>• We will develop an EDI internet page with clear accountable and responsible roles identified. (completed) |
| 4. | Develop stronger management and support structures to support staff development and wellbeing | Over the next 24 months | • We will aim to strengthen management at IDS through the following:<br><br>a) Review the Cluster Leader role at the Cluster Leader retreat, with respect to how cluster management and support mechanisms to ensure inclusive behaviour |

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| | | by cluster members and support staff wellbeing can be strengthened.<br><br>b) Introduce a clear management induction programme with all new managers inducted into IDS policy and procedures.<br><br>c) Offer a suitable externally delivered management or leadership training programme or coaching to all managers and leaders and will be compulsory for all new managers and cluster leaders.<br><br>d) Further develop the 360-degree appraisal process to include questions around EDI and collegiality, ensure confidentiality.<br><br>• We will explore the development of a system of Allies and provide training in Allyship across IDS to facilitate the creation of safe spaces for people to discuss their experiences and explore routes for addressing concerns.<br>• We will review and strengthen the status of the Equalities Champions Group and its existing plans, ensuring alignment with this action plan<br>• Resources will be made available where possible for formal or informal network or solidarity groups addressing EDI areas if they emerge. |
| 5. Strengthen reporting processes, follow-up support and disciplinary action to manage poor behaviour and improve the culture | Within the next 12 months | • We will aim to create and embed a culture where no one should feel unable or unsafe in reporting.<br>• We will reinforce and publicise a zero-tolerance of bullying, online and in the building.<br>• A report and support process will be introduced and will include an anonymous reporting route.<br>• We will review and strengthen the support provided to those who have an allegation of bullying or unacceptable behaviour made against them and for those who have made an allegation.<br>• We will share findings of unacceptable behaviour with the Fellowship Review and |

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| | | Promotions Board and all relevant internal promotions panels.<br>• We will share anonymised data and trends on report and support activity and exit interviews with the Board and IDS.<br>• All new policies and procedures will be transparent and communicated.<br>• We will Include collegiality and pastoral support in appraisal forms. |
| e) Introduce training and discussion forums, and conduct further work, to improve awareness of issues, including race and racism, and foster a sense of inclusion at the Institute | Within the next 12 months | • We will continue discussion of EDI issues including race, fostering a culture of inclusive reflection and debate.<br>• We will roll out mandatory training for staff, managers, SLG and the Board, with suitable consequences for non-compliance. Including training on the topics of: anti-racism, micro aggressions, workplace bullying.<br>• We will explore best practice training on EDI and externally facilitated discussions to continue to explore these areas.<br>• We will ask for staff and students input into next steps in reviewing staff experience particularly relating to race and whiteness. |
| f) Strengthen distributed decision-making to increase buy-in and make better informed decisions | Over the next 12-18 months | • We will review the current Strategic Leadership Forum and SLG subcommittee structure to ensure that consultation and decision making is undertaken in a fully inclusive manner.<br>• We will explore mechanisms to ensure that SLG decision-making is informed by, and accountable to, the perspectives of diverse staff, with options for doing this to be discussed. |
| g) Improve, uphold and better communicate IDS-wide policies, including recruitment and | Within the next 24 months | • We will review and improve the communication of policies, processes and support mechanisms.<br>• We will develop a policy on visas and citizenship and the support for staff, offering focused support based on individual circumstances. |

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| progression, to ensure IDS is following best practice and attracting and supporting staff from diverse backgrounds. | | • We will seek staff views on the use of minimum applicant pool targets and targets for representation.<br>• Our recruitment policy, including a focus on internal recruitment, will be reviewed with a focus on implementation. |
| h) Set up more inclusive and developmental project team practices to improve project experiences and support staff development | | • We will endeavour to ensure all recommendations are applied across all teams, Clusters and Projects at IDS, including project teams and those working remotely both in the UK and internationally. |