



“TOGETHER YOU CAN  
MAKE A  
WORLD OF  
DIFFERENCE”

### **From the margins to the middle: creating a culture of belonging without barrier or boundary**

Research systems worldwide, in academia and beyond, have taken a participative turn to address uncertainty and seek innovative approaches to complex global challenges such those outlined in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. From climate change to the ethical and societal implications of Artificial Intelligence (AI), inclusive research is a pathway that ensures diverse perspectives inform solutions that are effective, fair and socially responsible. Furthermore, recent research has shown that for underrepresented groups, such as racial and ethnic minorities and women, a sense of belonging – fostered within a culture of inclusion – is a core determinant of their career development.

Rooted in ethical and moral imperatives, inclusive research cultures not only enhance research quality but also foster more equitable outcomes. The active engagement of a collection of diverse voices and communities, perspectives and experiences, in the co-production of knowledge also enhances the research process, including how research is governed, financed, and integrated into broader policy and practice. REF 2029 embodies this participative transformation with a stronger focus on assessing People, Culture, and Environment (PCE); in which equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) priorities are integrated across research institutions aimed at initiating and sustaining equitable and supportive cultures for researchers (including PGRs), participants and communities. The application of indicators of inclusion are also significant in that they encourage and embed within research processes and institutions, a diversity of perspectives, methodologies, knowledge, skills and worldviews. Accordingly, these measures yield increased relevance, improved outcomes and deliver real-world impact.