UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Social Inclusion Annual Report

2025-2026

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Introduction.

Welcome to Warwick's Social Inclusion Annual Report 2025/26.

Social inclusion is central to our ambition to create a university where everyone can work, study and succeed, whatever their background, identity or circumstances. It is about removing barriers, recognising the value of difference and creating a culture in which people feel respected, supported and able to belong.

This report provides an overview of the progress made over the past year, as well as the challenges that remain. It brings together the work of the Social Inclusion team with examples from across the University, demonstrating how colleagues and students are contributing to a more diverse, inclusive and equitable Warwick.

Our data shows progress in several areas. We have seen increases in the representation of women and ethnic minority colleagues in some senior roles, a reduction in the gender pay gap, and continued development of programmes that support under-represented staff and young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. We have also strengthened our work on inclusive education, international student experience, neuroinclusion, accessible environments, research culture and support for those affected by global and local inequalities.

At the same time, the data makes clear that progress is not consistent across all areas. Socio-economic disadvantage, awarding gaps, ethnicity and gender pay gaps, and the under-representation of some groups in senior roles remain significant challenges. Being open about these challenges is essential. It enables us to understand where action is needed, measure the impact of our work and maintain our focus on long-term change.

The examples in this report show that social inclusion is a shared responsibility. It is advanced through the everyday actions of staff and students, through institutional policies and strategies, through research and education, and through partnerships with communities and organisations beyond Warwick. The breadth of activity featured here reflects the commitment, creativity and expertise of our university community.

We are grateful to everyone who has contributed to this work over the past year—by sharing their experiences, volunteering their time, participating in programmes, developing new approaches, supporting colleagues and students, or challenging us to improve. We also thank our external partners, whose collaboration helps us extend our impact and learn from practice beyond the higher education sector.

Our vision is to remove the economic, social and cultural barriers that have prevented people from working, studying and succeeding at Warwick, and to be recognised as best in class in equality, diversity and inclusion by 2030. Delivering this vision will require sustained effort, honest evaluation and continued collaboration across the University and with our partners.

We hope this report celebrates the difference that is already being made, provides a transparent account of our progress and priorities, and encourages all of us to reflect on our own role in creating a more inclusive Warwick, both through our everyday actions and through the decisions we make.





Kulbir Shergill, Director of Social Inclusion, and Stuart Croft, Vice Chancellor.

About us.

The Social Inclusion Team

The Social Inclusion team leads Warwick's institutional approach to creating a more diverse and inclusive community.

We research and analyse key challenges and opportunities, formulate strategies and interventions to drive progress against the University's KPIs, and set performance targets to track our impact. We advise the Social Inclusion Strategy Committee and senior leadership on key decisions, ensuring social inclusion is embedded in Warwick's vision and operational priorities.

We achieve this by:

- Collaborating with departments and the leadership of related strategies, such as Education and Student Experience and Research, to understand challenges and provide strategic advice.
- Designing and piloting innovative projects to facilitate change.
- Designing, delivering and commissioning training to create inclusive cultures across the University.
- Creating guidance and policies to support institutional goals.

Vision

We aspire to remove economic, social, and cultural barriers that have prevented people from working, studying, and succeeding at Warwick, and to be recognised as best in class in our approach to equality, diversity, and inclusion, for staff and students by 2030.

Objectives

1. Increase the diversity of Warwick's staff and students to maximise the creativity and innovation of its talent.
2. Develop a culture that supports students and staff in achieving their potential.
3. Become an internationally recognised leader in social inclusion

Key Performance Indicators

Our Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have been identified to help us track progress towards our social inclusion ambitions and understand where our work is making a difference. They provide a benchmark aspiration against which we can measure change over time, helping us recognise where we are making progress and where further action is needed.

Positive progress

For our students: Our Black awarding gap has also decreased this year and remains below the sector average, reflecting the continued focus across the University on reducing awarding gaps and work to ensure all students benefit from a diverse and student-centred education and experience.

For our staff: The data show positive movement across a number of our measures. Since our KPIs were set in 2019, our gender pay gap has continued to reduce and representation of underrepresented groups at senior levels has increased. In fact, we have now reached our KPI for women at FA9 among Professional Services staff.

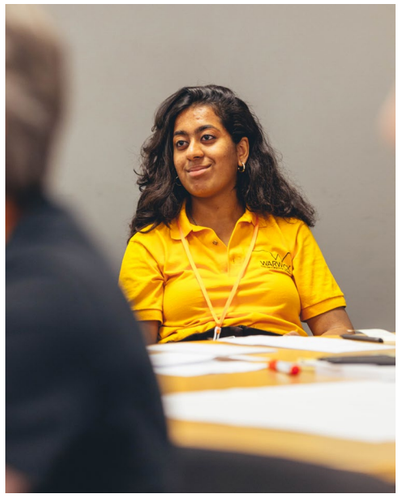
Continued focus

There is still more to do, and our KPI data help us identify where to focus our efforts.

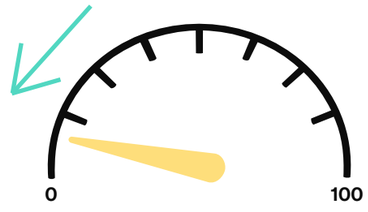
For our students: We have admitted more students from the lowest socio-economic status than previously, but as our student numbers rise overall they make up a lower percentage of the whole population. To reach our KPI, we are continuing to build on the positive work in this area through our Access and Participation Plan and Inclusive Education.

For our staff: This year has seen an increase in the number of Black, Asian, and minority ethnic staff employed at the University, which is positive progress in our ambitions to diversify our workforce. However this growth has primarily been in lower graded roles, thereby negatively impacting our ethnicity pay gap. This reinforces the importance of our continued work to improve recruitment, progression and retention. We are particularly focusing on creating more opportunities for underrepresented groups to gain the skills they need to progress into senior roles (see more on our talent programmes later in the report)

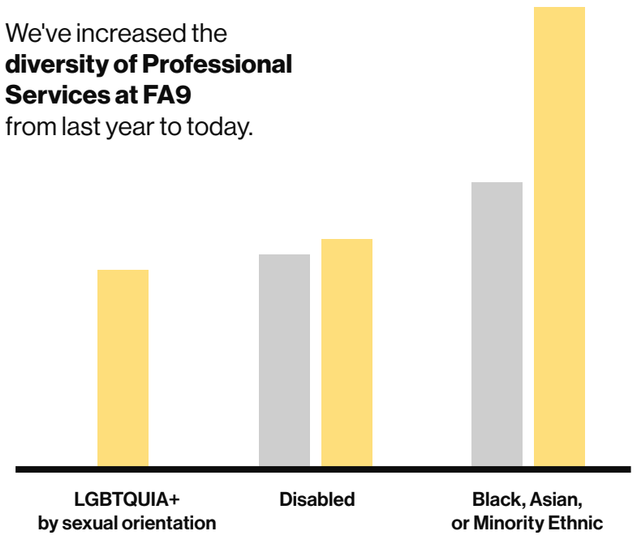
Taken together, the data show that our sustained focus on social inclusion is making a difference. While there is more to do, we are seeing meaningful progress across a number of our measures and are continuing to use the data to target our efforts where they can have the greatest impact.



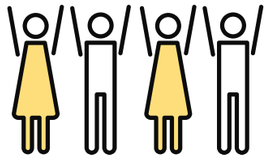
We've reduced our Black Awarding Gap by **5.4 percentage points to 10.4 percentage points**



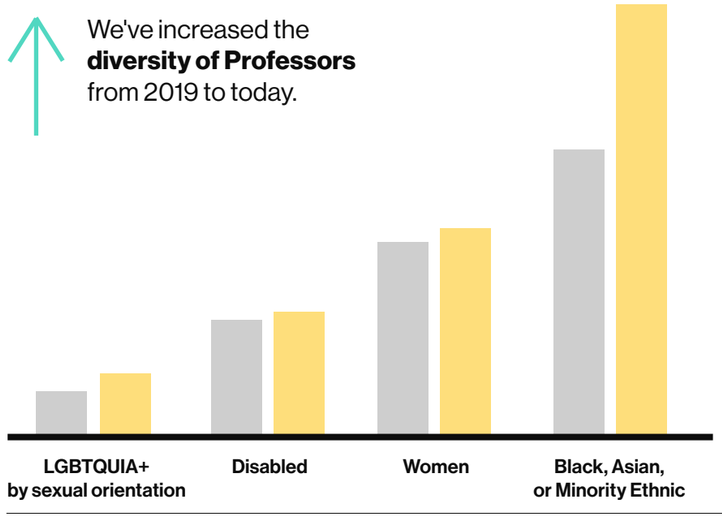
We've increased the **diversity of Professional Services at FA9** from last year to today.

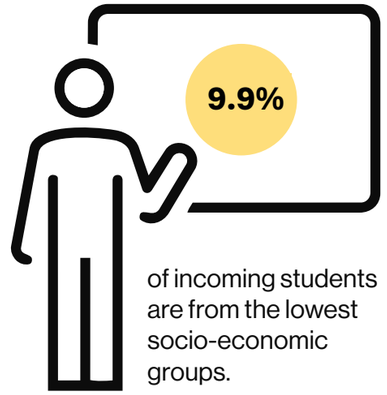


We've reached **50% women** at grade 9 in Professional Services.



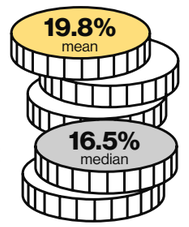
We've increased the **diversity of Professors** from 2019 to today.





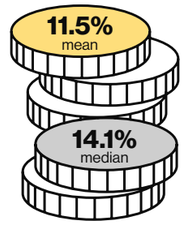
of incoming students are from the lowest socio-economic groups.

The increase in women in senior roles has had a positive impact on our gender pay gap.



We've reduced our mean gender pay gap by **6.1 percentage points** and our median gap by **8.2 percentage points** since 2019.

An increase in BAME staff in lower grades has a negative impact on our ethnicity pay gap, but we are working on pipelines to senior roles.



The action we're taking.

Over the past year, we have made significant progress on our journey toward greater inclusion.

This report shares some of the key highlights, showcasing both the work led by the Social Inclusion team and the wider efforts across the University to embed inclusion into our everyday practices.

Diversity

Through our Social Inclusion Strategy, we are working to increase the diversity of Warwick's staff and students, recognising that a community made up of different backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives creates the conditions for greater creativity and innovation.

Developing diverse talent pipelines

The Social Inclusion team are identifying talent that has found itself excluded and under-represented in higher education and providing programmes to nurture that talent and establish a pipeline of diverse and inclusive leaders for today and tomorrow.

Our **inclusive talent programmes** support our drive for a workforce whose diversity and inclusive leadership will be inspirational for Warwick's staff, students, and the partners and communities we work with.



EmpowerUs

EmpowerUs is a development programme to equip under-represented staff at grades 4, 5, and 6 with the knowledge and skills to address the unique challenges they face, and equip their managers to become catalysts for change.

This year, 22 staff plus their managers took part – making a total of 68 participants in the programme since the programme was launched in 2023. Feedback from the programme so far highlights the engaging in-person sessions, the safe space for thought-provoking discussion and reflection, and the valuable opportunity to network and benefit from peer support.

Aurora

Aurora is Advance HE's leadership development initiative for women. It is run as a unique partnership bringing together leadership experts, higher education providers and research institutes to take positive action to address the under-representation of women in leadership positions in the sector.

This year, 26 women at grades 6, 7, and 8 took part – making a total of 59 participants since the Social Inclusion team took over this programme in 2024.

"As someone from an ethnic minority, I've faced many challenges since starting university. Although I was working hard, I struggled to find my inner voice, the confidence to say what felt right or wrong. Through this programme, I finally found that voice. I've learned to speak up for myself and stand by what I believe is right. It's been a truly empowering experience. I would definitely encourage others to take part in this programme, not just for career progression, but to discover the inner strength that is so essential, especially when you come from an ethnic minority background"

Debasmita Palit, Student Administrative Services – EmpowerUs participant

Accelerate

Accelerate is a strategic initiative designed to bridge the diversity gap at grade 9 by supporting the next generation of leaders who have traditionally faced barriers to senior leadership positions, and providing inclusive leadership training for their managers.

This year, twenty staff at grades 7 and 8 plus their managers took part – making a total of 40 participants since the programme was launched in 2025. Feedback from the programme so far highlights the empowering emphasis on authentic leadership, confidence building, and the opportunity to reflect on values, leadership style, and career direction.

“I greatly valued taking part in Accelerate as it gave me many practical ideas for improving my leadership capacities and team-working skills authentically. The course was also very timely in supporting me to obtain an academic promotion, which I applied for in the months after starting Accelerate and which benefited immensely from my experiences on the programme. I recommend it wholeheartedly to applicable colleagues, and hope to see Accelerate continuing to succeed in its important social equity aims”.

Romain Chenet, Cross-Faculty Studies – Accelerate participant



Making PDRs more inclusive

The Social Inclusion team have updated our Inclusive Personal Development Review (PDR) Guide, recognising that fair and effective performance conversations are an important part of developing and retaining diverse talent.

PDR provides an opportunity for every employee to reflect on their achievements, discuss their development and agree objectives for the year ahead. But these conversations can also be influenced by stereotyping, assumptions, and expectations. By actively recognising these risks, managers can help ensure that all team members receive a fair and consistent review.

The updated guide provides key pointers for inclusive PDR, advice on preparing for the PDR conversation, and an invitation to support staff to set social inclusion objectives.

By making the process more inclusive, we can better maintain and improve employees' contributions in line with our goals and values and ensure that we assess performance and develop talent without bias.



Supporting young people to access opportunity with the EY Foundation

Since 2021, the Social Inclusion team have partnered with the EY Foundation to create opportunities for young people from low-income backgrounds and/or who are care experienced.

These **employability programmes** give young people an opportunity to get employability skills training, paid work experience, and mentorship. The partnership has now supported 190 young people who develop skills in areas such as financial literacy, presenting, and writing a CV, while also getting a first-hand idea of what it's like working in a large organisation through workplace experience placements in Warwick departments.

On this year's Your Futures programme at Warwick, all of the young people participating were eligible for Free School Meals and most had no previous work experience. Following the programme, 80% said they had a good or excellent understanding of career opportunities in higher education, and 100% agreed that they knew what skills, qualifications, work experience or training they needed to pursue their chosen career.



"I gained valuable insight during my time here and skills that will stay with me for the rest of my life. The experience has been irreplaceable and I highly recommend it to everyone."

Young person after participating on an EY Foundation programme at Warwick.

Spotlight on volunteers

To enable our EY Foundation programmes to run smoothly, we require many volunteers! We have had an outstanding response from staff, we are so grateful to everyone who has volunteered their time, your support is fundamental to the success of these programmes.

There are a number of opportunities throughout the year for staff to volunteer, including mentoring, mock interview panellists, insight and pathways speakers, and work experience hosts. By giving a small amount of their time, our staff volunteers can be the difference that changes a young person's future.

Volunteering is a great opportunity for colleagues to develop personally and contribute to Warwick's objectives for greater diversity and inclusion. Hear from some of our volunteers on why they got involved with this work: **Why I decided to support the Young Futures Programme**. And if you're interested in knowing more, contact Claire: **C.Algar@warwick.ac.uk.**

"To everyone who has been involved with our work, you've supported us to change young people's perspectives and futures, and helped us move closer towards our ambition to ensure equitable opportunities are available for all young people to succeed in the workplace. So a huge thank you."

Lynne Peabody, CEO – EY Foundation

Warwick are the EY Foundation Midlands Employer Partner of the Year award winner!

This year our partnership with EY Foundation was recognised externally – we are proud to have won the EY Foundation Impact Award for Midlands Employer Partner of the Year 2026.

This award is a wonderful recognition of what we've achieved together and of the many colleagues across the University who have helped make the programme such a success.

“The University of Warwick is an exceptional partner whose commitment to social mobility goes far beyond funding and participation. [...] Their collaborative approach, dedication to inclusion and willingness to innovate are just some of the reasons they were recognised as the Midlands Employer Partner of the Year at our 2026 Impact Awards.”

Shruti Sidhu, Corporate Partnerships Account Manager – EY Foundation



Providing entry to employment for young people with Early Career Internships

For participants who complete the EY Foundation's Your Future programme at Warwick, the Social Inclusion Early Careers Internship Programme provides a further step into the workplace.

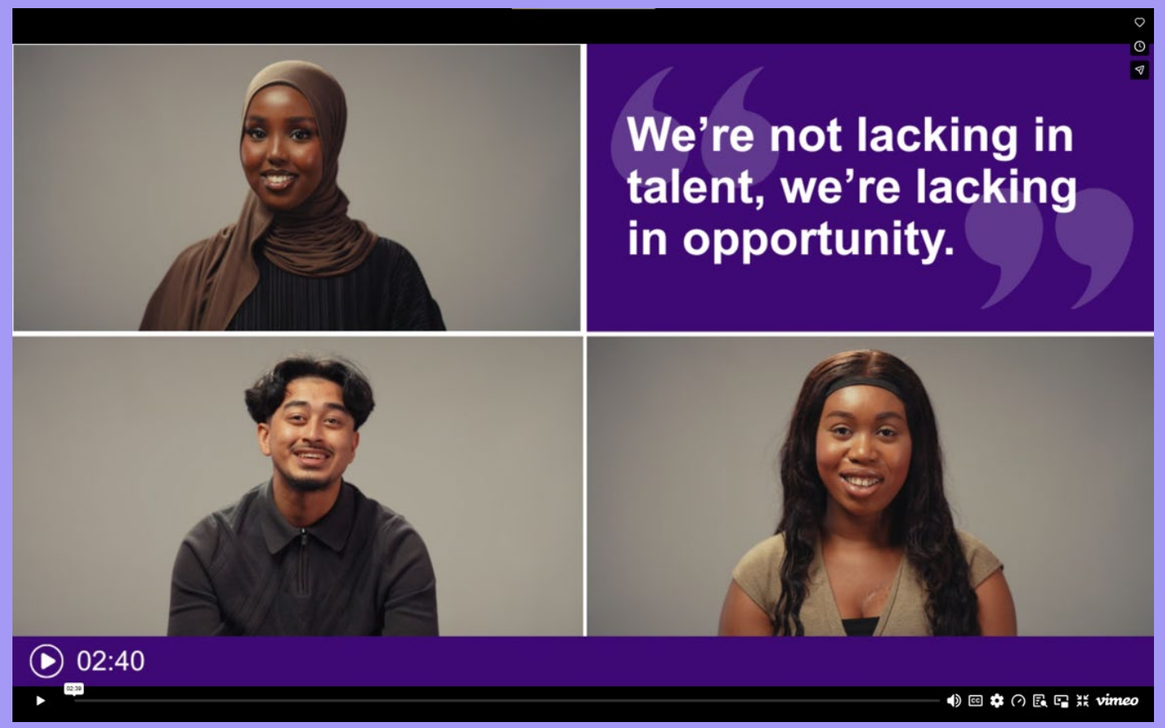
Each year, participants can apply for four paid early-career internships, providing an opportunity to build on the skills and confidence developed through the EY Foundation programme. By offering this next step opportunity, these young people can move from developing aspirations and gaining work experience, to securing paid employment and building a professional network.

The internships combine meaningful workplace experience with personal and professional development and the opportunity to gain a Level 3 qualification. Interns work within host departments for 12 months, gaining experience of how a large organisation operates while building transferable skills and professional networks.

We are incredibly proud of the achievements of our interns and the impact of the programme so far. Interns have gone on to:

- Studying at university.
- Securing permanent employment, including roles in recruitment and banking as well as positions here at Warwick in the Estates team and Warwick Arts Centre.
- Winning an award at the EY Impact Awards.

Watch our new video, bringing our intern's experiences to life, showing how these inclusive internships have shaped and made a meaningful difference to their lives - transforming their confidence, broadening their aspirations, and helping them realise they belong in professional spaces.



Click to view this video:

Across the University

Alongside the Social Inclusion team's work, colleagues across Warwick are driving a range of initiatives to strengthen and embed diversity across the University.

Researching inequalities in menopause care

Researchers at Warwick Medical School have been exploring how ethnicity, socio-economic background, and cultural norms influence women's experiences of menopause and access to healthcare.

The MenopauseGAP study used interviews and focus groups with women and healthcare professionals to understand the barriers affecting menopause care. Its findings highlight how cultural stigma, limited representation, language barriers and constraints within healthcare consultations can leave some women less likely to receive appropriate support.

The research found that Black and Asian women are around 80% less likely to receive hormone replacement therapy (HRT), while participants described having to advocate strongly for treatment or navigate cultural expectations that made menopause difficult to discuss.

The research calls for culturally tailored education, improved training for healthcare professionals, community outreach and accessible information in multiple languages and formats.



"We need to redefine how the menopause is being represented; everyone deserves a personalised, 'menopause-centric medicine' approach to their care. Moving forwards, I hope studies like the MenopauseGAP can make people aware of the diversity of menopause experiences within different ethnic groups."

Nina Kuypers, Patient and Public Involvement and Engagement (PPIE) participant and founder of Black women in Menopause

Supporting our international student community

Warwick International Student Experience (WISE) Toolkit

The Student Experience team and the WIHEA Internationalisation Learning Circle have developed the Warwick International Student Experience (WISE) Toolkit, giving staff practical guidance to support the University's diverse global student community.

One in three of our students is international, these students bring a wide range of backgrounds, cultures, and prior learning experiences. Appreciating this helps staff offer more effective support and create inclusive learning environments. In response to this, the toolkit brings together insights from students, staff, and institutional data to help colleagues understand different experiences of teaching, assessment, engagement, and support.

It explores common issues and challenges in the international student academic journey, including settling into Warwick, navigating English-language use and UK academic culture, preparing for assessment and engaging with university life. It also includes practical advice on inclusive teaching, digital accessibility, student participation and using data to identify opportunities for improvement.

The toolkit is designed to evolve as new evidence and examples emerge, supporting staff to move beyond assumptions about international students and towards a more informed understanding of the diversity within our global community.

This resource was developed as part of a collaborative project with the Internationalisation Learning Circle and a Staff Masterclass funded by the Warwick International Higher Education Academy (WIHEA).

One World Warwick

This year, the One World Warwick initiative celebrated 60 years of global engagement, offering a platform for students to share their heritage and talents with the wider community. This month-long campaign brought together events, partnerships and activities celebrating Warwick's international community and its global connections.

Staff and students took part in cultural celebrations, international events, and opportunities to engage with global issues. The initiative also highlighted Warwick's expanding international partnerships and research collaborations, including the launch of the Warwick India Network, which brings together staff and students working across research, education and cultural collaboration.

Relive the magic with this video of highlights:



Warwick are the #WeAreInternational Institution of the Year award winner!

We are pleased to share that Warwick has been named Institution of the Year at the inaugural UKCISA #WeAreInternational Awards, selected from more than 420 nominations representing 120 institutions.

The award recognised the University's work to enhance the experience of our international community, including culturally responsive wellbeing support, pre-arrival guidance, intercultural training, international opportunities, and global partnerships.



"To be recognised as Institution of the Year for international student inclusion reflects our commitment to build an inclusive global campus community, reflecting our values as a University. [...] Our global, student-centred programme reinforces our commitment to internationalisation, innovation and inclusion, with our diverse global community of students, staff and alumni at its heart."

Professor Michael Scott, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (International).



Creating inclusive opportunities through sport at PowerHouseGames

Warwick Sport hosted the 96th PowerHouseGames, bringing together 68 participants from Cardinal Newman, Arnold Lodge, and Avon Park for a day of fully inclusive sport.

The event was designed around a simple principle: nobody left on the bench. Participants took part in boccia, kurling, seated volleyball, goalball, walking football, kwik cricket, and seated netball.

The day was a great success thanks to support from Warwick staff, student volunteers, and Warwick Sport Scholars, who presented medals and certificates to all participants.



"At Warwick Sport, we believe physical activity should be accessible to everyone. The PowerHouseGames shows how simple adaptations can make sport fully inclusive without losing any of the excitement. Seeing students support one another, build confidence and try new activities is exactly why we are proud to deliver this event."

Jade Woodward, Active Programme Manager – Warwick Sport



Making laboratory spaces more accessible

Colleagues in Life Sciences hosted the first **Reasonable Adjustments in Laboratory Settings (RAiLS) conference**, bringing together laboratory practitioners and colleagues with experience of supporting reasonable adjustments in non-traditional learning environments.

The online conference attracted 63 participants from 20 institutions and 36 departments across the UK. Sessions explored practical approaches to accessibility, adapting laboratory learning environments, and navigating the complexities of reasonable adjustments in STEM subjects.

Bringing practitioners together created an opportunity not only to share solutions, but to consider how laboratory environments themselves can be designed differently. Plus speaker presentations, Q&A session responses, and student posters have all been made available on the event webpage to support continued learning across the sector after the event.

Work to understand what this means for Warwick is ongoing with colleagues across the university, including representatives from academic departments, Disability Services, Estates, Social Inclusion, and the Dean of Students Office.

This project was funded as part of Warwick's wider work on Inclusive Education.

Celebrating ten years of Writing Wrongs

Warwick Law School celebrated the tenth anniversary of **Writing Wrongs**, a programme supporting local young people to develop their writing, confidence, and interest in human rights and social justice.

More than 400 young people aged 14-17 have participated over the past ten years, getting the opportunity to work with professional writers, journalists and academics, develop original pieces on issues that matter to them, and experience university life.

The programme also creates pathways beyond the workshops. Winning pieces are published in Lacuna Magazine, with the winning student offered a paid internship with the publication.

The programme illustrates the impact of creating opportunities for young people to see themselves in higher education, change their ideas of what is possible, and develop the confidence to pursue it.





"Taking part in Writing Wrongs was one of the best decisions I've ever made. [...] I learnt so much and was mentored by incredibly inspiring, passionate tutors who really taught me a lot. I left the programme feeling far more confident in my writing, and excited about everything Warwick had to offer. Before Writing Wrongs, I didn't know much about Warwick, and I honestly don't think I would have applied, or be here now, without it. I'm truly grateful for the opportunity, because I now can't imagine being anywhere else."

Leona Mathias, Writing Wrongs alumnus and current undergraduate English student at Warwick

A Quick Request...

Please answer the diversity monitoring questions on your personal record.

We are committed to increasing the diversity of Warwick's staff and students. To do this, we need your help to better understand the make-up of our community – please check and update the diversity monitoring questions on your personal record on **SuccessFactors** / **Student Records Online**.

It should only take a few minutes and this information is important for us to be able to understand the diversity of our staff, provide adjustments to those who need them, evaluate our progress against strategic objectives and KPIs, and meet our statutory reporting obligations.

In response to staff requests and emerging work, in 2023 we added new questions on cultural heritage and socio-economic background which have particularly low response rates at the moment. Currently only around a third of staff have answered these questions, but we are aiming to achieve similar response levels as other areas (~95%). Your responses to these questions will help inform our ongoing work in support of our Race Equality Charter award and the development of our strategy on staff social mobility.

For more information about what we ask and why, see our **Diversity Monitoring** webpage.



Culture

Diversity is only part of the picture. Creating an inclusive culture means ensuring that people with different identities, experiences, and needs can participate fully and feel that they belong.



Piloting Appally to support neuroinclusion

The Social Inclusion team have joined a 12-month pilot of Appally, an online tool designed to help people understand their workplace needs and identify strategies and adjustments that could support their productivity and wellbeing.

The tool uses a self-guided assessment to help people identify their workplace challenges and then recommends resources, strategies, and potential adjustments that could work for them. Importantly, the process is controlled by the individual, allowing them to explore their needs privately before choosing what they want to share with a manager.

In addition, in response to a range of research demonstrating that managers lack confidence in supporting neurodivergent staff and emphasising the importance of training and supporting managers in this area, Appally includes a manager toolkit with bite-size training modules on neurodivergence.

Warwick participated in Appally's beta testing last year, alongside organisations from a range of sectors. Feedback suggested strong interest in a tool like this; 60% of participants across organisations involved said their existing adjustments were only partially useful and feedback from staff at Warwick indicated users found Appally's assessment questions insightful and the AI recommendations appropriate and useful.

Following the successful beta test, Warwick is now working with a small cohort of early adopters to understand how Appally fits alongside existing HR and adjustments processes before wider implementation. We will share more information soon!

In the meantime, this year we have also created a new **Neurodiversity Inclusion and Support Resources** webpage, bringing together information about support, peer networks, inclusive practice, and personal experiences in one place.

Creating continuous learning with CrossRoads

Over the past year, the Social Inclusion team has continued to evolve our programme of **micro-learning for staff**, recognising that inclusion is most effective when learning is continuous rather than confined to a single training session.

Working with Crossroads Global, we have delivered short, themed modules directly to staff by email throughout the Academic year. Since October 2025, four modules have reached around 9,600 people, covering Cultural Awareness, Respectful Disagreement, Menopause at Work, and Socio-Economic Inclusion at Work.

Engagement has been strong. More than 3,000 colleagues completed each of the first two modules, while 94% of participants in the Menopause at Work module gave it a thumbs up. The Socio-Economic Inclusion module generated more than 130 reflections from colleagues sharing personal experiences of bias and negative experiences relating to socio-economic background at Warwick.

The programme has also evolved in response to feedback, with greater emphasis on lived experience and a balance between video and text-based learning. Follow-up Lunch and Learn sessions have provided opportunities for colleagues to explore the issues in greater depth with subject experts.

Turning inclusion into practice

Alongside our online learning and micro-courses, the Social Inclusion team have also introduced a programme of **Social Inclusion in Practice** workshops, designed to help colleagues move from understanding inclusion to applying it in everyday work.

Staff can sign up to sessions on Conscious Inclusion, Respectful Disagreement, Managing Diverse Teams, Providing Adjustments, and Equality Impact Assessments. Through case studies, discussion, reflection and practical tools, staff are encouraged to explore how inclusive behaviours affect workplace culture and decision-making.

The workshops are designed to support active and practical learning. For example, Respectful Disagreement helps staff practise navigating difficult conversations and different viewpoints, Providing Adjustments includes quizzes and discussions of case law, and Conscious Inclusion encourages staff to reflect inwards and consider what their own personal biases might be.

Feedback has been very positive so far, highlighting the value of creating space for open discussion and providing learning that can be applied beyond the workplace.

"I really enjoyed hearing from others across the university, sharing best practice and discussions"

Participant on Conscious Inclusion

"Good discussions, open conversations, all individuals spoke, calm environment, good pace by trainers who created an open culture within the session"

Participant on Respectful Disagreement

"Good mix of theory and group discussion. Workshop could be applied to personal life as well as work and this was welcomed."

Participant on Respectful Disagreement

"Thank you for such interactive, engaging and informative training."

Participant on Managing Diverse Teams

"I have already recommended the course!"

Participant on Managing Diverse Teams.

"[The trainer] did a great job - some good examples that definitely got us talking!"

Participant on Equality Impact Assessments

"I really appreciated the opportunity to discuss actual case studies as it helped me to better understand the importance of examining each case objectively, but also how to determine the core barriers."

Participant on Providing Adjustments

"The group discussions around the case studies were particularly helpful. I found [the trainer] an engaging host too."

Participant on Providing Adjustments

Building more inclusive environments

Social Inclusion Manager Andy Johnson and Senior Project Manager in Estates Alastair Dixon have joined a new Inclusive Environment HEI Network, creating opportunities to learn from other universities about how physical environments can better support diverse needs. So far the network has met twice, and discussions have covered accessible wayfinding, sensory and quiet spaces, inclusive teaching rooms, emergency evacuation planning, and everyday adjustments.

One theme emerging from the network is the importance of designing environments that anticipate different needs rather than waiting for individuals to encounter barriers, members have discussed how relatively small design decisions can have a significant impact on dignity, accessibility, and participation.

Learning from the network will feed into our ongoing work on inclusive spaces, which has so far led to the creation of the University's **Inclusive Environment Statement of Principles** and a single webpage hosting all the details of **Inclusive Spaces on Campus**.



Warwick Conferences are a Silver Diversity, Equity and Inclusion miaList award winner!

We are pleased to share that Warwick Conferences has been awarded Silver in the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion category at the Meeting Industry Association (mia) miaList Awards, recognising their ongoing commitment to creating environments where everyone feels valued, supported, and able to thrive.

The miaList awards celebrate excellence across the business meetings and events sector, recognising organisations and individuals making an outstanding contribution to the industry. The DEI category specifically celebrates meaningful and lasting contributions to inclusion within the UK meetings and events sector.

"A huge thank you to everyone involved — from our teams, partners and community. This work is continuous, and this award reinforces our dedication to listening, learning and improving every day. Here's to building a more inclusive future together."

Warwick Conferences

Across the University

In addition to projects led by the Social Inclusion team, staff and students across Warwick are taking action to foster a more inclusive culture in everyday practice.

Putting inclusion at the heart of lifelong learning

Warwick's Centre for Lifelong Learning hosted the **Universities Association for Lifelong Learning (UALL) Standing Committee on University Teaching and Research in the Education of Adults (SCUTREA)** Conference, bringing together higher education leaders, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers from across the UK and internationally to consider how universities can respond to changing social, economic, and workforce needs.

The conference explored how higher education can remain accessible and responsive to learners at different stages of life, with discussions spanning flexible study, skills development, widening participation and collaboration between universities, communities, and employers.

The conference positioned Warwick as a contributor to wider conversations about the future of lifelong learning and demonstrated how inclusion can extend beyond traditional models of student participation.



Warwick are the UALL-SCUTREA award winner!

We are pleased to share that the Centre for Lifelong Learning received the UALL-SCUTREA Award for its sustained contribution to inclusive and flexible education.



"We are delighted to have received the UALL-SCUTREA Award, which recognises the sustained contribution and significant impact that the Centre for Lifelong Learning has made in advancing inclusive and flexible education, supporting learners of all ages, and strengthening community engagement and lifelong skills development. This achievement stands as a testament to the dedication, professionalism, and commitment of the staff within the Centre."

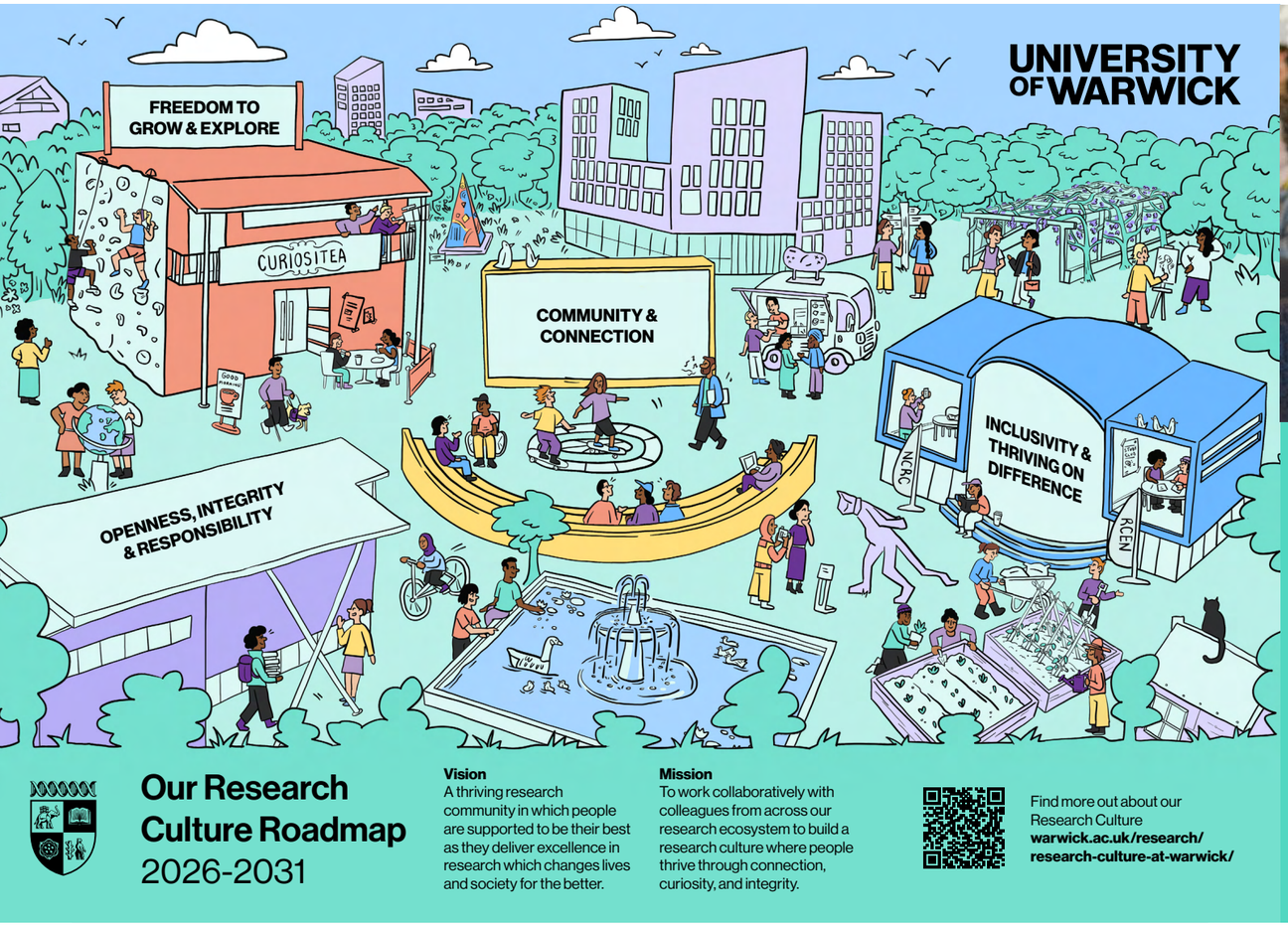
Dr Nalita James, Reader and Head of the Centre for Lifelong Learning.

Building a more inclusive research culture

Roadmap and action plan

The Research Culture team launched Warwick's **Research Culture Roadmap and Action Plan**, setting out an ambitious vision for a research environment where people can do their best work.

The roadmap was developed through engagement with the research community and is supported by a theory of change framework helping colleagues understand how specific activities and investments are expected to contribute to longer-term cultural change.



Research Culture Week

The team also held the first **Research Culture Week** focused around our research culture commitments. The week brought together researchers, research students, technicians, professional services, and third-space colleagues.

The week provided the opportunity to showcase the roadmap along with some of the great work and offerings available at Warwick through a range of in-person, hybrid, and online events. Sessions explored themes including community and connection, growth and exploration, openness and integrity, and inclusion and thriving on difference.





Conversation series

Alongside these showcase activities, the National Centre for Research Culture has run a **conversation series** throughout the year, offering the chance for a deeper dive into a theme or a project. This year events in the series explored a number of inclusion-related themes including equitable research partnerships, co-creating resources for inclusive research cultures, and diversifying leadership. Catch up with past events and see upcoming conversation on the series webpage.

Making space for conversations about race and identity

Warwick Arts Centre's **Warwick at 60 Talks** programme created opportunities for audiences to explore race, identity, wellbeing and belonging through conversations with writers, historians, artists, and campaigners.

The programme included Kadiatu Kanneh-Mason speaking about being young, gifted and Black, journalist Gary Younge discussing creative freedom as an act of resistance, and historian and broadcaster David Olusoga in conversation with Kwame Kwei-Armah.

By bringing these conversations into a public cultural space, the programme created opportunities for members of the Warwick and wider community to engage with questions of identity and representation through different perspectives and lived experiences.







Opening conversations about culture and faith

What This Day Means to Me series

The Internal Communications team has been sharing new pieces on insite to create opportunities for colleagues to share what cultural and religious celebrations mean to them.

The 'What this day means' to me series has featured colleagues from across the University sharing their personal experiences of important cultural and religious occasions. Mahoor Sultan spoke about what **Eid al-Adha** means to her and how she celebrates with her family, Dr Gurnam Singh shared the significance of **Vaisakhi** and its importance to the Sikh community, and Jianhua Yang spoke about **Lunar New Year** and how he celebrates it with his family.

These pieces focused on staff lived experiences are creating space for people to share their own stories, and encouraging others to listen and learn. If you would like to share your experiences, please do reach out to the Internal Communications team.



One Fast Challenge

As part of Warwick Business School's EDI Festival, the Warwick Islamic Society and Chaplaincy organised the **One Fast Challenge**, inviting colleagues to experience a day of fasting during Ramadan.

The challenge gave colleagues an opportunity to learn more about the experiences of Muslim staff and students who go without food and drink from dawn to sunset during Ramadan. The initiative was designed not simply as an awareness-raising exercise, but as an opportunity to ask questions, learn something new and reflect on the different experiences within Warwick's community.



"Putting together the One Fast Challenge for Ramadan has been one of the highlights of my time working at the University. [...] The core purpose was to increase awareness, respect and empathy for the experiences of our Muslim staff and students during the month of Ramadan and to celebrate the wonderful diversity of our Warwick community."

Eleanor Partridge, Administrative Officer (EDI) – Warwick Business School – Organised the challenge.

Dr Emily Róisín Reid recognised for inclusive medical education

Dr Emily Róisín Reid, Associate Professor and Director of Student Experience, Employability and Progression at Warwick Medical School, has received the prestigious **Association for the Study of Medical Education (ASME) Inclusive Medical Education Award.**

The award recognises Emily's decade-long commitment to inclusive education and widening participation, securing vital student bursaries and leading large-scale anti-racism initiatives, and the transformative impact of her work on thousands of students and educators.



"I'm honoured to receive this award, which recognises the important work that colleagues, students and I have worked so hard for over the past decade to make our curricula and learning environments inclusive, equitable and innovative. I'd like to thank all of the amazing colleagues and students that I've collaborated with on the many, many projects and initiatives."

Emily – Reflecting on her achievement.

Leadership.

Leadership means more than being visible on the national or international stage, it means sharing what we learn, challenging established approaches, and working with others to improve practice.

Collaboration and conversation with our external partners

Knowledge exchange with Jaguar Land Rover

The Social Inclusion team has continued to build relationships beyond the higher education sector.

Social Inclusion Manager Claire Algar joined the judging panel for the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce Trailblazer EDI Award 2026, visiting shortlisted organisations to learn more about their approaches to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

Following the judging process, Claire also took part in a knowledge exchange visit with Jaguar Land Rover at Gaydon. Claire shared Warwick's work on early careers, staff social mobility, and training, while learning from JLR's approaches to social mobility and staff networks.

The visit provided a valuable insight into Warwick's and JLR's approach to this work and has created opportunities for future collaboration.

Sharing practice with Dresden and Ljubljana universities

In September, EDI colleagues from universities in Dresden and Ljubljana visited the Social Inclusion team to exchange practice. We also arranged for them to meet with other teams across the institution including Report + Support, Inclusive Education, and Research Culture.

Warwick shared work on our new respectful disagreement training, the range of work we do as accredited University of Sanctuary, and how we've developed and rolled out data dashboards. Colleagues shared with us their women's academic leadership programme, diversity certification, and accessibility equipment lending scheme.

We were delighted to host our **EUTOPIA** partners on campus and will continue to work together to transform how European universities address global challenges.

Warwick are a Bronze Collaboration of the Year award winner!

We are pleased to share that the WP Midlands Forum founded by Warwick's Widening Participant team has received national recognition, winning **Bronze in the Collaboration of the Year category at the 2026 HEIST Awards**. The HEIST Awards recognise excellence and innovation in education marketing.

The Forum is co-led by Arden University, Nottingham Trent University, The University of Warwick and the University of Derby, and was established in 2019 to create a free and welcoming online space where widening participation professionals across higher education could share ideas, discuss challenges, and learn from one another. It has now grown into a community of 130 members from 33 institutions across the Midlands.



"To see the Forum recognised in this way is incredibly special. Winning this bronze award is wonderful recognition, but what matters most to me is the community we've built. [...] It has grown because people have given their time and expertise so generously, driven by a shared commitment to improving opportunities for widening participation students."

Amanda Lang, Director of Student Experience, Engineering – one of the founders of the forum.

Developing a Social Mobility Strategy for staff

This year, we have been developing Warwick's first **staff Social Mobility Strategy**, recognising that social mobility is not only about widening access to higher education, it is also about ensuring that a person's socio-economic background does not determine their opportunities in work.

Family income, education, geography, accent, social networks and previous access to opportunities can all shape confidence, career pathways, and progression, and often in ways that are difficult to see. Our emerging strategy focuses on three pillars: Belonging, Opportunity and Growth.

- Belonging focuses on creating an environment where colleagues from different socio-economic backgrounds feel valued and able to contribute.
- Opportunity looks at recruitment, outreach and progression, with a focus on identifying and removing structural barriers.
- Growth focuses on equitable access to development, mentoring, sponsorship and leadership opportunities.

Social Mobility Awareness Day

As part of this work, this year we marked Social Mobility Awareness Day with a Staff Social Mobility event, co-hosted by the Social Inclusion and Widening Participation teams.

Social Mobility Day is a national day that seeks to promote wider conversations about social mobility and encourage action that brings about positive change. This years' theme was 'Stories Matter', and we took this opportunity to reflect on the story of social mobility at Warwick.

More than 40 colleagues took part in a panel discussion and roundtable conversations, sharing experiences and helping shape the future direction of the strategy.



Challenging young people to think like scientists

The **National Scientific Thinking Challenge** (NSTC) has run for six years, from 2021 to 2026, reaching more than 60,000 young people. This year, 249 schools and 15,909 students took part across the UK and internationally.

This free online challenge is designed for Year 10 students and focuses not on recall or prior curriculum knowledge, but on the ability to "think like a scientist", meaning interpreting information, evaluating evidence, understanding graphs, and testing hypotheses.

The NSTC's inclusive design has been central to its success. Any school can participate, regardless of its resources or status, and schools are not ranked publicly by average score. Participants came from independent schools, grammar schools, comprehensive schools, international schools, and an SEN school.

The central lesson from the NSTC is simple: talent is everywhere. By giving young people an opportunity to tackle genuinely challenging science without requiring prior knowledge, the NSTC has created space for students from very different backgrounds to discover what they could do.

After six years, we are sadly saying goodbye to Dr Nick Barker, one of the founders and key drivers of the Challenge. We want to recognise the incredible work he did for this initiative; Nick's drive, commitment and passion for his work has been both incredible and infectious, helping the NSTC grow from strength to strength every year. We are very sorry to see Nick leave Warwick and wish him every success for the future.

The Social Inclusion team will be working with colleagues across the institution to continue to deliver the NSTC, hoping to build on the successes the programme has already seen so far.

Across the University

Beyond the Social Inclusion team's priorities, many individuals and departments are showing leadership in advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion across Warwick.

Launching a sector-wide response to global crises

Warwick is one of the founding members of the **Global Response Platform,** a new initiative bringing together UK universities and sector organisations to coordinate responses to international crises affecting students, academics, and higher education systems.

The platform aims to move beyond individual, ad hoc responses by enabling universities to share learning, coordinate activity, and develop practical pathways for learners affected by conflict and displacement.

Initial projects include expanding access to online education for learners in crisis-affected contexts and supporting refugee inclusion at UK universities' overseas branch and partner campuses.

Warwick's involvement demonstrates how universities can use their collective expertise and infrastructure to respond to global challenges at greater scale.



Warwick are an Order of St Panteleimon award winner!

We are pleased to share that Warwick received an international award for professionalism and mercy from the Order of St Panteleimon, recognising the ongoing support provided by staff and students to people affected by the war in Ukraine.

The recognition reflects a broad range of activity across the University, including specialist summer schools and leadership programmes, visiting lecturer opportunities, medical equipment support, and partnerships with Ukrainian universities.

"It's fantastic to see Warwick acknowledged in this way for the wide range of ways our community have been offering support. [...] This award is a celebration of everyone involved, staff, students and partners, who continue to show commitment, compassion and practical support when it's needed most."

Professor Gwen van der Velden, Education Studies – accepted the award on behalf of the University.



Tackling gender-based violence

The University of Warwick has become one of only two universities in England to achieve the **EmilyTest Gender-Based Violence Charter**, recognising our commitment to creating safer, more supportive environments.

The Charter requires institutions to demonstrate that their policies, practices and procedures meet standards designed to prevent harm, respond effectively to disclosures, and support students and staff.

The Charter's five principles were co-created with students, education staff, and gender-based violence specialists. They are being open and learning, educated and empowered, comprehensive and connected, equal and inclusive, and safe and effective

"Achieving EmilyTest Charter status acknowledges our dedicated staff and students' efforts to date and our ongoing commitment as a community to the highest standards of safety and support. Warwick is continually looking to strengthen the support we offer, so that we can tackle gender-based violence effectively. We will continue to partner with students, the Students' Union, staff, and EmilyTest to build confidence, trust, and a safer campus."

Professor Stuart Croft, Vice-Chancellor and President.



Tackling digital poverty regionally

The Sustainability team is working with Coventry City Council, the NHS Integrated Care Board Coventry and Warwickshire, and other partners through **#CovConnects** to tackle digital poverty and reduce electronic waste.

The programme repurposes unwanted technology, repairing and redistributing devices to residents who need them through community partners and frontline services. It also provides digital training and support, helping people access technology in ways that are meaningful to their lives.

Warwick colleagues and students have contributed expertise across the project. For example, Warwick Business School students supported business planning and marketing, while colleagues at WMG developed a carbon calculator to demonstrate the environmental benefits of reusing donated equipment.

The project demonstrates the role universities can play in addressing inequalities beyond their own campuses, using their expertise and partnerships to support fairer communities.



Advancing human rights and inclusion in digital health

Led by Professor Sara (Meg) Davis from the Centre for Interdisciplinary Methodologies, Warwick has formalised a **new partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO)** to strengthen joint work on human rights, gender equality, and inclusion in global digital health governance.

The partnership brings together expertise from across Warwick with international researchers, policymakers, civil society, and youth leaders.

The collaboration builds on Warwick's existing contribution to WHO initiatives on digital health, AI ethics, and human rights. Its focus is particularly timely as AI and digital technologies increasingly shape how healthcare is delivered and governed.

Professor Swaran Singh recognised among health sector's most influential figures

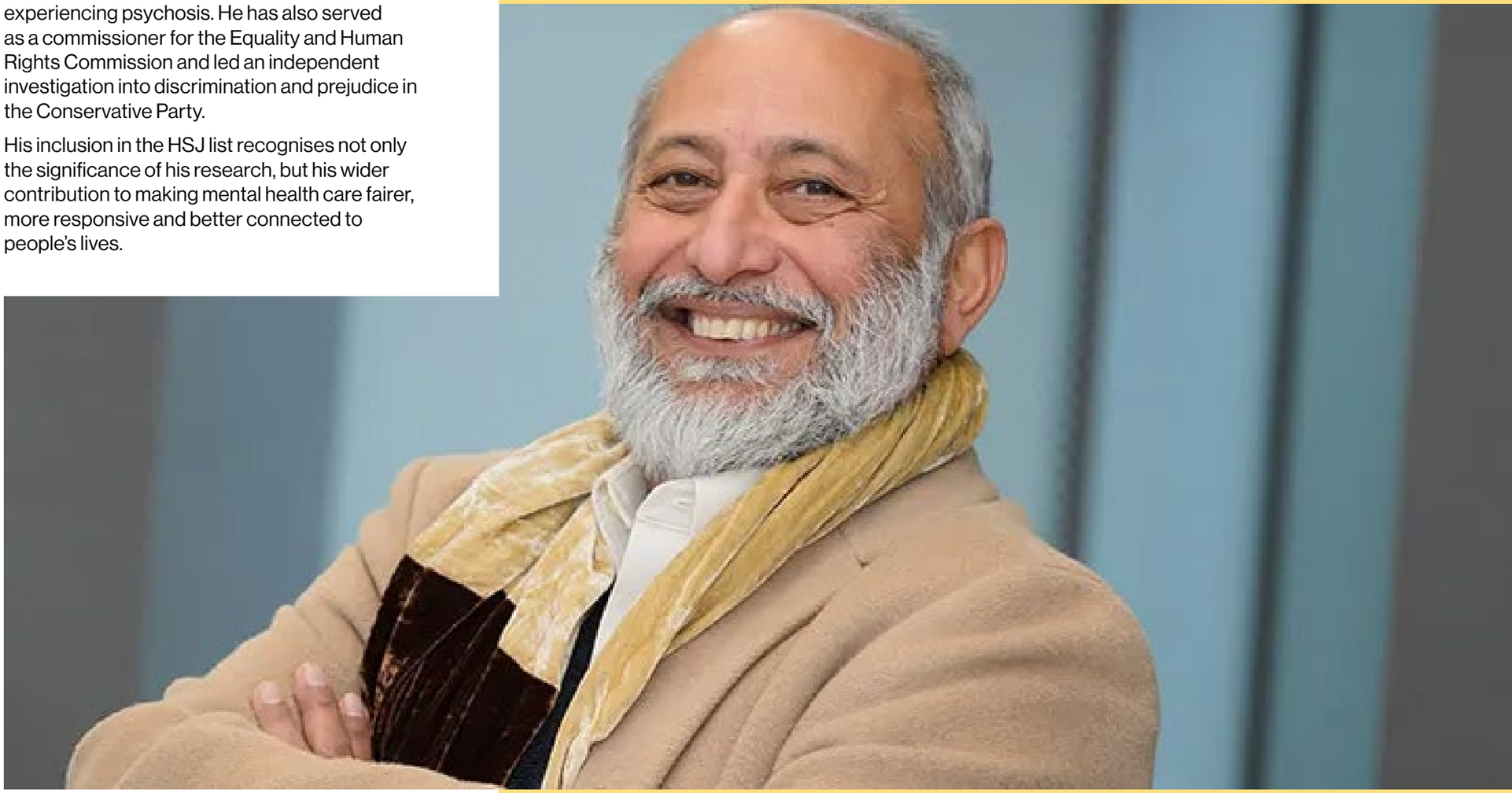
Professor Swaran Singh in Warwick Medical School has been named one of **Health Service Journal (HSJ)'s Top 50 Most Influential Black, Asian and minority ethnic figures in health**, recognising his influential work to address inequalities in mental health care.

Professor Singh has undertaken groundbreaking research into mental health inequalities affecting Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities, alongside a wider academic career spanning early intervention in psychosis and the transition between child and adult mental health services.

His commitment to reducing inequalities has been shaped by both his research and professional experience. Originally trained as a surgeon, Professor Singh changed direction after becoming involved with human rights groups supporting children affected by the 1984 Sikh massacre in New Delhi. He retrained in psychiatry and moved to the UK in 1991, subsequently working across academia and clinical practice.

In 2018, he established Warwick's Centre for Mental Health and Wellbeing Research, building on his longstanding commitment to improving mental health outcomes. Earlier in his career, he developed the ETHOS early intervention service, which improved outcomes for young people experiencing psychosis. He has also served as a commissioner for the Equality and Human Rights Commission and led an independent investigation into discrimination and prejudice in the Conservative Party.

His inclusion in the HSJ list recognises not only the significance of his research, but his wider contribution to making mental health care fairer, more responsive and better connected to people's lives.



People.

Meet the Social Inclusion team:



Kulbir Shergill, Director of Social Inclusion

“Inclusion within a university is not merely a principle – it is a commitment to cultivating a culture where talent is nurtured, knowledge is both created and shared, and every individual feels welcomed and valued. Achieving this requires a deep understanding of our mutual responsibilities as human beings. For me, inclusion means recognising and respecting the impact our actions and work have on others, and ensuring that those we serve – students, staff, and the wider community – are at the heart of everything we do.”



Emma Cann, Head of Social Inclusion

“Fostering inclusion remains a vital priority. For me, this means cultivating a culture rooted in respect and understanding, where each individual feels valued. It also involves encouraging personal responsibility in shaping an environment where everyone has the opportunity to thrive."



Andy Johnson, Social Inclusion Manager

“I believe that an individual’s background should have no profound impact on their ability to access, be part of, and succeed within university and have spent my career working to address this.”



Claire Algar, Social Inclusion Manager

"For me, inclusion simply means ensuring that no one’s background limits their chance to belong, feel valued for their contribution, or achieve success in their career. Much of my work in this space focuses on social mobility – breaking down barriers and opening up opportunities so that everyone has the chance to thrive and fulfill their potential."



Kat Grover, Social Inclusion Manager

"My career in higher education has focused on ensuring university processes and structures work for everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances. I'm passionate about embedding inclusion in everything we do and promoting collaboration to keep our processes open, transparent and accountable for all."



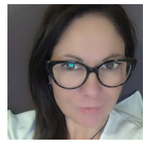
Michaela Hodges, Social Inclusion Manager

“I am driven by a belief that we can always find better ways of doing things to create a more equitable world. I believe in fairness, humility, and always learning. I love reading (for work and for fun), so let me know if you want any equality-related book recommendations!”



Marie Kettell, Social Inclusion Officer

"Everyone deserves to feel like they belong and have an equal chance to succeed. At Warwick, I’ve been proud to work toward that goal by raising awareness for women’s health and menopause in the workplace, championing accessibility, and supporting underrepresented groups. For me, creating lasting positive change is all about combining empathy with evidence-based action to help people thrive."



Lorraine Martin, Team Administrator and PA to Director

“Inclusion matters to me because I’ve never understood why anyone wouldn’t accept others for who they are. Working within the Social Inclusion Team has opened my eyes to the many forms of discrimination people face every day. As someone who has experienced barriers in my own life, being part of this team gives real purpose to my career. It’s empowering to contribute to work that uplifts others and helps create a space where everyone feels seen, valued, and respected.”

Our Governance and Engagement Framework

The Social Inclusion Governance and Engagement Framework details some of the key ways the Social Inclusion Team listens to and collaborates with staff across the University to work towards our Social Inclusion Objectives.

This Framework was refreshed in 2025, following extensive consultation with experts from inside and outside the university and with our community and we'll be reviewing it at the end of this academic year to evaluate the effectiveness of this new approach.

Social Inclusion Strategy Committee

Oversees the engagement framework and provides oversight, guidance, and direction on matters pertaining to social inclusion strategy, policy, procedure and practice across the University.

Social Inclusion Collaboration Group

Supports collaboration across institutional inclusion related activities allowing key roles to work together on operational details.

Watch an interview with Kulbir Shergill, Director of Social Inclusion and Chair of the Collaboration Group talking about the introduction of the group, the wider governance and engagement framework refresh, and plans for the future.

Social Inclusion Staff Forum

Creates a work and professional staff networking group to develop a community of practice for social inclusion, with open attendance for staff who deliver, or would like to contribute to, social inclusion and equality, diversity, and inclusion work at the University.

Watch an interview with Ros Roke, Director of Strategic Delivery Unit and Chair of the Staff Forum talking about the purpose of the Forum, what members have been working on, and plans for the future.

Social Inclusion Engagement Groups

Acts as a hub for considering the lived experience and wider context of the university community with the lens of a particular personal characteristic(s).

Read **interviews with Nivaria Morales Salas and Jane Coleman,** outgoing Chairs of the Disability and Gender Engagement Groups talking about what inspired them to take on the role, the achievements they are most proud of, and their advice for colleagues considering becoming a future Chair

Social Inclusion Networks

Provides peer support and networking and, additionally, acts as an amplifier of voices of marginalised lived experiences.

Self-Assessment Teams

Oversees the Race Equality Charter and institutional Athena Swan Charter applications.

The Race Equality Charter SAT is chaired by Kulbir Shergill and championed by the Provost, Professor Caroline Meyer.

"Advancing race equality is a key priority for our institution. As Senior Sponsor for this initiative, I am committed to ensuring our approach is robust, evidence-based, and reflective of our community. We are forming a multi-disciplinary Self-Assessment Team (SAT) to guide our Advance HE Race Equality Charter (REC) renewal application, and I encourage colleagues from across the University to consider contributing to this essential work." Caroline Meyer, Provost

The Athena Swan SAT is chaired by Robert Horton, Head of Administration in the School of Law. The University was awarded an institutional silver Athena Swan award in January 2024, which is valid until January 2029.

Looking ahead.

We are focused on turning progress into lasting change. The coming year will see us building on much of the work outlined in this report, and we will continue to use data, research, and staff experience insight to understand where challenges persist and focus our efforts where they can have the greatest impact.

We will be continuing to deepen our relationships with our community through our refreshed Governance and Engagement Framework, undertaking a through self-assessment as we prepare to resubmit to the Race Equality Charter, opening up conversations on neurodiversity, and working with colleagues across the institution to embed inclusive practice in their everyday work.

Thank you to everyone named in this report, and the many others who are supporting social inclusion across Warwick – we look forward to continuing our work together in the year ahead.



UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK