**Annex 6 Equality and diversity guidance**

**Equality and diversity guidance**

This guidance aims to establish and promote good equality and diversity practice in the conduct of DRILL projects. It is relevant to those who will conduct and participate in research, host related activities and disseminate the research and pilot findings. Below you will find guidelines about how to approach your project in a way which ensures that it is inclusive and a genuine example of coproduction - that it can put the values at the heart of DRILL into practice.

**Reaching everyone**

When you plan your project you will have to consider who would benefit from it, who you need to involve, and what barriers they may face to participating. We know that many disabled people face multiple barriers to their participation in society because of the ways in which their impairment(s), health conditions and different identities are perceived by others. People may face barriers related to one of their identities. For example, they could be discriminated against because of their gender (man, woman, transgender, gender variant), sexuality, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, faith or cultural heritage.

However, people may also face barriers as a result of the relationships between their different identities. For instance, disabled members of the L,G,B,T,Q,I+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex and more) community report being discriminated against by both straight disabled people and gay non-disabled men. People with autism who also identify as being on the transgender spectrum describe the impact of the intersectionality between their different characteristics as shaping the way they are perceived by others. They find that they have to deny one or more of their identities to ‘fit in’. This shows that it is possible to be a ‘minority within a minority group’ and face specific barriers as a result.

DRILL suggests therefore that when designing your project you do the following:

**Inform yourself**

If you want to include a particular community of interest or place or people with a specific type of impairment, you need to find out more about them.

This could involve reading recent and relevant reports, so you have some idea of the lived experiences of the group.

It would be a good idea to talk to those organisations already working with the group to be involved. These could be organisations in the public, private, voluntary and community sectors.

You may want to further explore the needs of the group by holding interviews or a focus group. By learning more about the group you will get a better idea about how to promote your project to them and address the barriers they face.

**Inform the group of what you’re doing**

As you inform yourself, you will learn more about how to reach the group you would like to engage. For example, you may learn about particular meeting places or services you could visit.

You also need to think about how the group would like to access information, for example, leaflets from an organisation, regular mailings, meetings, radio, internet or events.

When you produce information, you need to consider the format. We know that the way in which information is given can either facilitate inclusion or create a barrier. Ask the group up front about the best way for information to be exchanged. Remember that it cannot be effective if it does not meet their needs. You may want to consider things like - writing in plain English, producing easy read or large print documents, using interpreters (different languages, including BSL), note takers or arranging loop systems or audio support. You could also consider making use of technology to produce video diaries, Youtube clips, music or photos. These can all be effective ways to involve the group and to document their experiences and contributions.

**Find out the barriers**

Once you know what barriers exist for the group you can think about how to remove them. Below are some common issues to consider:

* How accessible is the space you are meeting / conducting research activities?
* How accessible is the information you are providing participants? Will it make them feel included, or like you are writing for someone else?
* Is the venue an accessible, welcoming and appropriate venue for your work?
* Is there accessible transport to and from the venue, and do you need to pay travel costs for your participants to allow them to engage?
* What other commitments or events do you need to consider? For example, school holidays, festivals, times to worship, regular meetings and group times
* Do you need to think about the caring responsibilities of those you want to involved? Do people need support with this to be able to give their time to your project?

Past experiences may mean that disabled people aren’t interested in your project. For instance they may well have experience of participating in research or consultations and not being informed by the research findings. They may remember feelings of disempowerment around being cast as research ‘subjects’ instead of partners. If people have been let down or betrayed in the past then they will be very wary of investing anything in such a project again.

Your attitude is crucial. The practical really helps. Find out what an individual’s reasonable adjustment requirements are in time to ensure they are met.

Consider in advance, how people may be part of your coproduction process and be clear about their value. Discuss past experiences and explain how your project will do it differently. Make clear what you can do and why you believe it would be beneficial to all involved to have their experience included. Do not make promises you cannot keep. This all takes time. Be prepared to build a relationship. Be genuine.

**Why do we want the information about who you are including in your project?**

The BIG Lottery is committed to valuing diversity and promoting equality of opportunity as a grant maker. They require the DRILL Programme to follow their equality and diversity guidance. The DRILL Programme therefore requires their grant recipients to do likewise

The DRILL Programme wants to know who benefits from the projects we fund so we can find out if individual applicants need more support. If we are not building a better evidence base about approaches that enable disabled people to live independently then we need to change what we’re doing

The DRILL Programme also wants to learn how our grants impact on disabled people who may also face multiple barriers as described above

The DRILL Programme will then share what we have learnt. By doing this we will be able to support projects to have the biggest impact possible.

**Why is it useful to you?**

* By gathering the correct equality and diversity information you’ll be able to find out who is benefiting from your project
* You will be able to ensure you’re reaching the disabled people that you should
* You will be able to make changes to your project to increase its effectiveness
* Celebrate your good practice in coproduction and inclusivity and share it with us and others in our wider community

**How will we use information you give us?**

* If we believe that your project isn’t reaching all those who could benefit or if there’s an issue with the way you’re gathering your evidence then we may ask you to make some changes
* When you’re finished we’ll be able to assess how effective you’ve been in promoting equality and diversity, and your impact.
* The DRILL Programme will collate the equality and diversity information from all DRILL projects. This will help us assess how effective we’ve been in supporting disabled people to achieve independent living.
* The DRILL Programme aims to leave behind a legacy in relation to its impact on disabled people achieving independent living. It also aims to leave a legacy of increased experience, knowledge and skills within disabled people’s organisations in relation to achieving independent living. This information will help us to evidence this legacy.