

Over the past year, the EDI Working Group has made meaningful progress in establishing a robust data baseline to better understand our current position on diversity and inclusion. This work has helped us identify areas of underrepresentation and begin to consider how we might address them.

In 2023, we embarked on a significant data collection initiative focused on the nine protected characteristics. Our initial aim was to assess the composition of our Executive Committee and establish a clear baseline for diversity and inclusion at the leadership level. In 2024, we revisited this data to track any changes and assess progress over the past year.

But this was just the beginning. Recognising the importance of a broader perspective, we expanded our data collection efforts to include our wider membership. This allowed us to compare the diversity of our Executive Committee with that of our overall membership, and to benchmark both against national census data.

While the response rate to the wider membership survey was 25%, the insights gained were nonetheless valuable. The data provided a clearer picture of our community and highlighted key areas where representation could be improved. Key insights from the research are as follow:

1. There is an obvious bell curve in terms of age demographics, showing that representation was mainly from the 45 to 65 age groups.
2. Race and ethnicity and gender identity, the data shows that CLOA is generally aligned with census data.
3. An underrepresentation of certain religious groups within the Executive when compared to the census data.
4. Most striking underrepresentation is around disability. Both in the Executive and within our membership.

Based on this data and our findings, we have identified the following top three priorities for the next two years:

1. Enhance our understanding of how we can better support people with disabilities.
2. Ensure that the CLOA membership and Executive are spaces where people with disabilities feel welcomed, valued, and eager to participate.
3. Open up opportunities for the next generation of potential Executive Committee members.

We will do this by:

- Hosting a roundtable discussion to gather insights from our membership, collecting both qualitative and quantitative data and case studies. This will allow us to dive deeper into the experiences and perspectives of our members.
- We will also engage with national organisations that advocate for and represent individuals with lived experience of disability. This will help us learn from the experts and integrate their knowledge into our work.
- We'll be sharing best practice examples and strategies around inclusive recruitment and project delivery, so that we can all learn from what's working well in other parts of the sector.
- Finally, we would like to launch an 'Aspiring Leader Award' each year, if approved, members will be invited to nominate someone demonstrating best practice aligned to our EDI theme.

The EDI working group is open to all, if you would like to get involved to help CLOA on its journey, then please do get in contact with us at [info@cloa.org.uk](mailto:info@cloa.org.uk) **#everyonecanlead**

Thank you very much to all our EDI working group members and to our Chair Julie Russell for all their support and energy.

**Zsuzsi Lindsay, EDI Champion for the Executive Committee, June 25**

A context note for the reader of where we started and why we are doing this:

## **Report on progress against the EDI action plan**

Our aim is to continue to make headway towards becoming an organisation that has '[woven EDI into its fabric](#)' by continuing to deliver against our [EDI strategy and mission statement](#).

For a more in-depth update you can watch this [v-blog](#).