

# The urgent need for a UK EDI Trainers Association:

## Raising the Bar, Together



In a world where Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) should be foundational not optional, it is sobering to admit that EDI training remains largely unregulated, inconsistent in quality, and often lacks intersectional depth. The truth is, some trainers, while passionate, may lack the lived experience, cultural competency, or critical awareness to deliver transformative EDI learning. Passion alone is not enough.

That is why the EDI Trainers Association is being launched: a practical, supportive, and deeply inclusive network to unite trainers across sectors and lived experiences. Together, we'll share tools, improve practice, and amplify voices that often go unheard.

### Why this association is needed

1. **Training is inconsistent and unregulated:** Despite EDI training becoming a legal and organisational necessity, there is no formal standard or governing body to support or assess trainers' cultural competence.
2. **Lack of representation and lived experience:** According to a 2023 review of EDI training provision across UK public sector organisations, 62% of trainers delivering sessions on race equality were not from ethnically diverse communities. 45% had no direct lived experience of any protected characteristic.
3. **Reported failures of EDI training:**
  - In 2021, a national media outlet reported a major government department's race training workshop was delivered without any discussion of White privilege or microaggressions—leading to complaints from staff of colour.
  - In 2022, a large university delivered anti-transphobia training in which outdated language was used repeatedly, resulting in student protests.
  - In 2023, an EDI session in a local authority failed to include disability, with no mention of reasonable adjustments or access requirements.

These are not isolated events. They reflect wider systemic issues around who is deemed 'expert' and the urgent need for continuous development.



## **Strengths and Opportunities in EDI Training**

- Many trainers have deep passion, story-driven delivery, and a heart for justice.
- A growing number of trainers now use co-production and intersectionality as a foundation.
- The increase in demand for inclusive workplaces presents an opportunity to raise the bar. But...

## **Areas for Improvement**

- Lacking robust understanding of specific issues (e.g. trans rights, disability, neurodiversity, anti-racism).
- Few trainers engage in cross-cultural or cross-identity work.
- Training is often one-size-fits-all, lacking intersectional or trauma-informed approaches.
- Evaluation methods are inconsistent.

## **Best Practice in EDI Training Includes:**

- Design shaped by people with lived experience.
- Content tailored to organisational/individual needs
- Assessment of client journey; who they are what they do and where they are on the EDI journey
- Cultural competence as a requirement not a bonus.
- A trauma-aware, psychologically safe approach.
- Ability to challenge bias constructively.
- Intersectionality at the heart of content.
- Practical workplace application and policy insight.
- A safe space, inclusive language, inclusive nudges and more

## **Poor Practice Looks Like:**

- One-off sessions with no follow-up.
- Generic content delivered by trainers with no shared lived experience.
- No examples tailored to audience sector.
- Use of outdated or offensive terminology.
- Over-reliance on statistics with no human story.



## **Self-Assessment: Are you ready to join?**

### **Answer yes or no:**

1. Do you have lived experience of one or more protected characteristics?
2. Do you regularly work alongside communities different from your own?
3. Have you received in-depth training on trans inclusion, neurodivergence, race equity, disability access, and faith inclusion?
4. Do you use co-production to develop your sessions?
5. Do you review and update your content at least twice a year based on feedback?
6. Do you challenge yourself to improve your use of inclusive language and understanding of power?
7. Are you familiar with UK-specific case law relating to the Equality Act 2010?
8. Do you understand intersectionality beyond the theory?
9. Have you ever received feedback that changed your training approach?
10. Do you work with accountability partners or mentoring networks to improve your practice?

If most of your answers are 'No', it's time to join us.

If your answers are yes but your evidence is thin, non-existent or based on your personal thoughts only, not what is written in your evaluations, or what delegates tell you, join us, then this Association exists for you.



## **The EDI Trainers Association will offer:**

- Monthly learning circles and thematic workshops.
- Peer review and accountability networks.
- A directory of trainers by lived experience and area of expertise.
- Toolkits, policy updates, and practical resources.
- Reduced-cost training, mentoring and CPD.
- Opportunities to co-produce sector-specific content.

## **Membership Is affordable and transformative.**

Whether you're new to EDI or a seasoned practitioner, we invite you to bring your knowledge, your humility, and your willingness learn and to grow.

**Together, we can raise the standard of EDI training across the UK by centring the voices that matter.**

## **Interested? Contact Alyson Malach**

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