

The EDI STEM Training Hub: Cultivating Inclusive Workspaces through Collaborative, STEM-Specific online training

Dr Clare Stevenson
Technician Partnership Conference 2026



How Technicians make it happen

Dr Clare Stevenson

Head of Science Coordination and Research Culture



Outline

- Background
- Neurodiversity project 2024-2025
- Neurodiversity project 2025-2026
- EDI HUB Plus project
- What's next and lessons learnt
- Call to action



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Year in Industry



Technical Career at John Innes



CSci
Chartered
Scientist

Technician **Commitment**



Senior Management at John Innes



Biotechnology and
Biological Sciences
Research Council



EDI Hub +

Doer

My Values

Inclusivity

Bravery

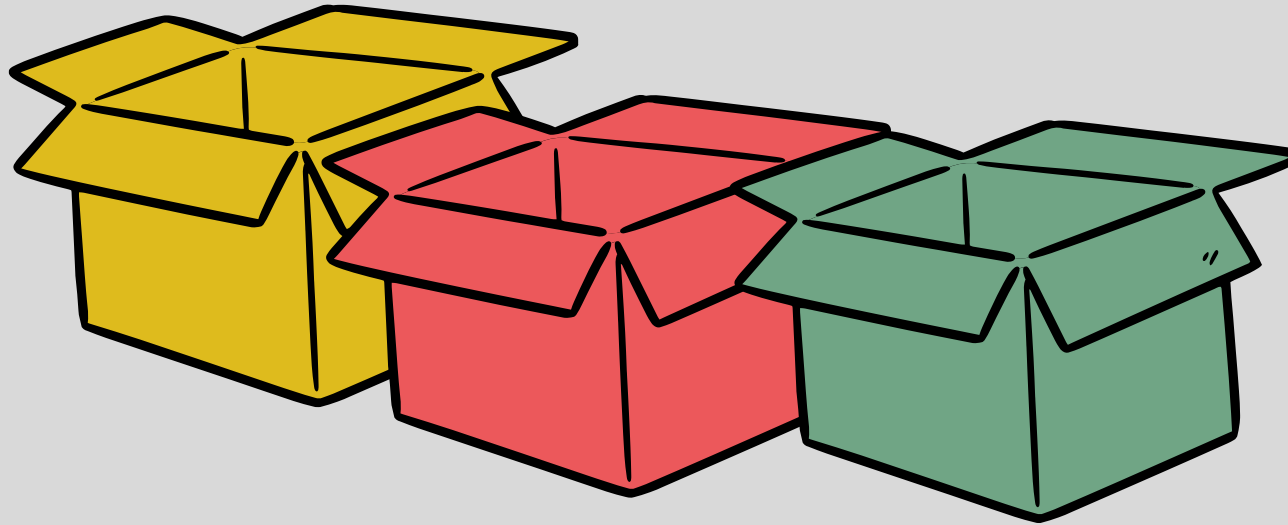
Recognition

Enthusiasm

Lifelong
learning

Teamwork

Encouragement





John Innes Centre and the Norwich Research Park



What is research culture?

THE
ROYAL
SOCIETY

The Royal Society defines research culture as encompassing the **behaviours, values, expectations, attitudes and norms** of our research communities.

It influences researchers' career paths and determines the way that research is **conducted and communicated**.



How



Who



Environment

Research culture - Neurodiversity

20%+ of the population are neurodivergent

48% lab workers identified as neurodivergent

33% of neurodivergent employees were dissatisfied with support they get from their employer

13% of organisations have been involved in employment tribunals relating to neurodiversity

Neurodivergence is a Disability as defined by the Equality Act

Right to reasonable adjustments

Not be discriminated against or harassed

Research culture - Neurodiversity

Accessibility Advocates group

“It gives me my strengths, and they have shaped my career.”



Dr Kelsey Byers
Group Leader



James Piercy,
Comms
and
engagement



Professor Graham Moore
Director 2022-2025
Blog - January 2024

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Connecting Culture Project

Understanding, Valuing and Celebrating Neurodiversity



Biotechnology and
Biological Sciences
Research Council

Timeline: July 24 - July 25



Leah Milner-Campbell
Neurodiversity
Project Officer

It takes a community
to deliver
a culture project
Thanks

Connecting Culture project outputs?

Online learning

- 2 online e-learning courses
- Introduction to neurodiversity
- Neurodiversity for Managers
- 600+ in first 3 months
- All BBSRC Institutes





Connecting Culture project outputs?

In person training created and delivered

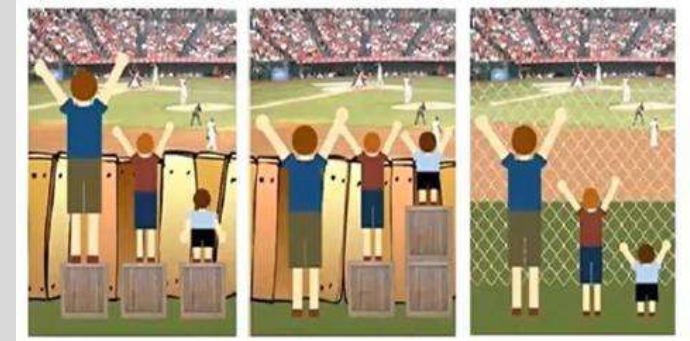
3 training courses developed

- Allyship
- Advocating
- Managers

Delivered to 7 BBSRC institutes with 172 attendees

Impact

- Managers' knowledge increased by 35%
- Allies' confidence to increased by 42%
- Allies' knowledge increased by 60%
- Neurodivergent participants felt 72% more confident advocating for themselves at work

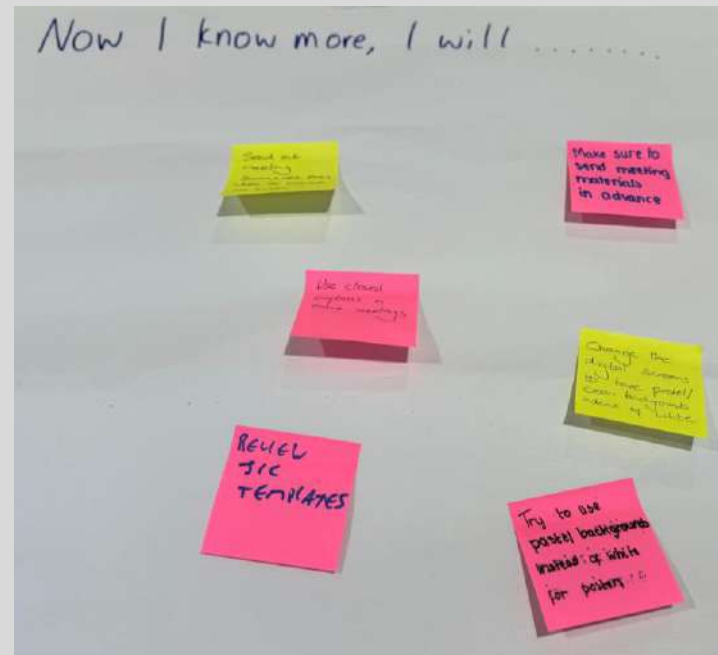


All resources available to the BBSRC institutes

Connecting Culture project outputs?

Communication Strategy

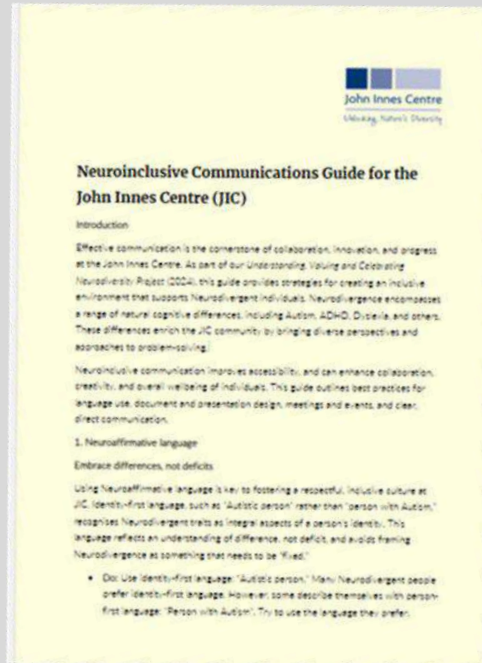
Internal comms and awareness raising
Neurodiversity cake club – Nov 24



Connecting Culture project outputs?

Communication Strategy

Internal comms and awareness raising



Communications guide

- Neuroaffirmative language
- Creating accessible documents
- Inclusive meetings and events
- Using clear and direct language



Connecting Culture project outputs?

Communication Strategy

- Internal comms and awareness raising
- Internal newsletter
- External Blogs and social media – ongoing resource



BLOG

What makes a Neurodiversity ally?

19th March 2025

In our journey towards creating truly inclusive workplaces, understanding Neurodiversity allyship has become increasingly important. But what does it mean to be a Neurodiversity ally, and how can we meaningfully support our Neurodivergent colleagues? We spoke to some of our colleagues to find out.

[Read the story](#)



BLOG

Diverse minds for a diverse world: the case for Neurodiversity in science

26th February 2025

At the John Innes Centre, diversity is at the heart of what we do. Just as we celebrate and leverage biodiversity in our research to solve global challenges in plant and microbial science, we recognise that Neurodiversity - differences in how people think, process, and interact with the world - is equally vital to our success.

[Read the story](#)



BLOG

Exploring Neurodiversity through an intersectional lens

22nd January 2025

To truly understand and embrace Neurodiversity, we must examine how it intersects with other identities, such as race, gender, and LGBTQIA+ identities. At the John Innes Centre, our Neurodiversity Project aims to understand and acknowledge these intersections, shedding light on the unique challenges faced by individuals who navigate multiple layers of marginalisation.

[Read the story](#)



BLOG

Top tips for Neuroinclusive communication

21st November 2024

Embracing Neurodiversity is a crucial part of creating an inclusive environment where everyone can thrive, regardless of their cognitive style. That's why we have developed an internal Neuroinclusive Communications Guide as part of our Understanding, Valuing and Celebrating Neurodiversity Project. Read on for four top tips from our guide that anyone can adopt to promote Neuroinclusive communication.

[Read the story](#)



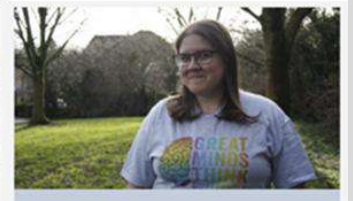
BLOG

Celebrating Neurodiversity in science: honouring trailblazers

11th October 2024

"Neurodiversity is an important part of organisations, teams and society, and without people that think differently we wouldn't be as creative, efficient or strategic." Professor Graham Moore FRS, Director of the John Innes Centre As we observe Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) Awareness Month and Dyslexia Awareness Week this October, it's a great opportunity to...

[Read the story](#)



BLOG

Unlocking JIC's Neurodiversity: An introduction to our Understanding, Valuing and Celebrating Neurodiversity project

19th September 2024

On the brick wall beside the entrance to the John Innes Centre reception, there is a white plaque featuring the JIC logo. Underneath the blue squares and name, you will find three words that sum up the mission of the organisation: Unlocking Nature's Diversity.

[Read the story](#)

Beyond awareness: creating an Autism-affirming environment



4.1k impressions
234 engagements
~100 clicks

Authentic quote from an Autistic PhD student and gave clear call to actions.

Engagement on social media was driven by academics and experts external to JIC increasing the reach and impact



Lisa-Marie Shillito • 3rd+

Professor of Geoarchaeology and Heritage Science | Director ...

11mo • 🌐

+ Follow ...

I don't often talk about being autistic. I love talking about research, and hate talking about myself (even those two things are of course very interconnected!). It's very encouraging to read this from the John Innes Centre, which has great advice for how workplaces can support and value their autistic colleagues. Many of these, such as the communication guide, are essential for autistic colleagues, but beneficial to everyone!



Juliet Coates • 2nd

Associate Professor at University of Birmingham

11mo • 🌐

+ Follow ...

This is so important and needed.



John Innes Centre

29,028 followers

11mo • Edited • 🌐

BLOG - Beyond awareness: creating an Autism-affirming environment

... more



5



Connecting Culture project outputs?

Neurodiversity networks

Parenting Neurodivergent Children – [webinar series](#)

- Understanding Your Child Through an ADHD Lens
- Getting Support at School
- Autism Development and Diagnosis: A Parent's Journey
- Identifying and Supporting Your Dyspraxic Child
- Understanding and Supporting Your Dyslexic Child
- Identifying & Diagnosing ADHD & Autism
- Establishing a Workplace Support Group
- Resource Recommendations

Parent and Carers Group

Accessibility
Advocates JIC

NeuroNook
QIB

Accessibility
Champion EI



Connecting Culture project outputs?

Neurodiversity Champions



- 2 days in person training – split with homework
- 20 from Roslin, 5 from EI, 5 from QIB. 9 from JIC
- Range of staff from students to senior researchers and support

Inform, Signpost, Listen, Champion



Local information

Working together

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- Background
- Neurodiversity project 2024-2025
- **Neurodiversity project 2025-2026**
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Neurodiversity project - after July 2025

- More in person training in delivered in Norwich
- Networks and Groups continue
- Dedicated email – neurodiversity@jic.ac.uk
- More information about our project: <https://jic.link/neurodiversity>
- Follow us on social media: @JohnInnesCentre

E-learning – Collaborative model

- Training now made available to all - www.jic.link/elearning
- Newcastle first to licence the e-learning, September 2025
- Essex University licensed the e-learning, January 2026
- Coupon option for smaller number – UEA, York
- Interest from a variety of other Universities, industry and groups



Challenges around resources and ongoing impact monitoring

Impact Monitoring

- All Data in the training platform
- Download as csv files
- Used 'R' to edit files
- PowerBI to create dashboard
- Can be updated more easily
- Consistency in recording

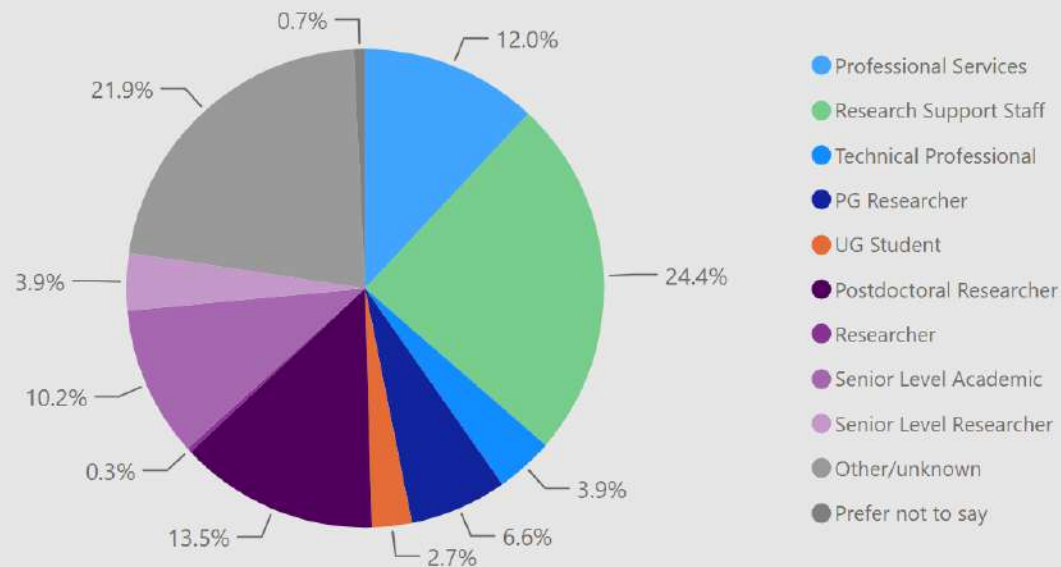


Alice Brewer

Neurodiversity Awareness Training: Overview



What is your role?



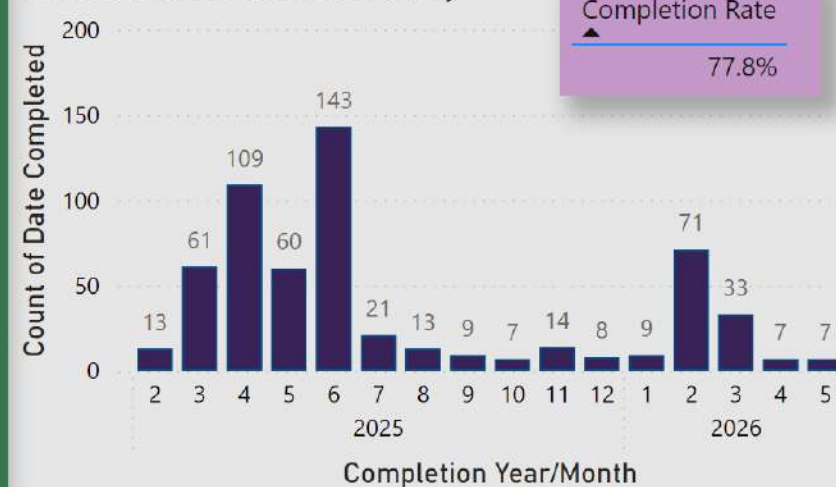
Number of Participants

Introduction to Neurodiversity	Managing Neurodiverse Teams
746	292

Managing Neurodiverse Teams

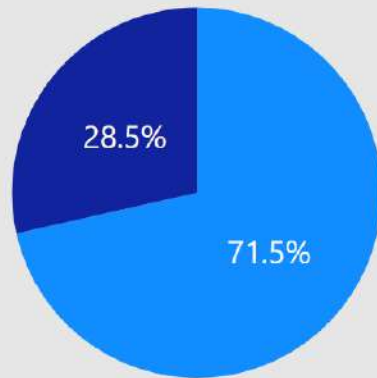


Introduction to Neurodiversity



Have you done any Neurodiversity training before?

● No ● Yes



How confident do you feel talking about Neurodiversity?

○ Pre-Training ● Post-Training



How would you rate your current understanding of Neurodiversity?

○ Pre-Training ● Post-Training



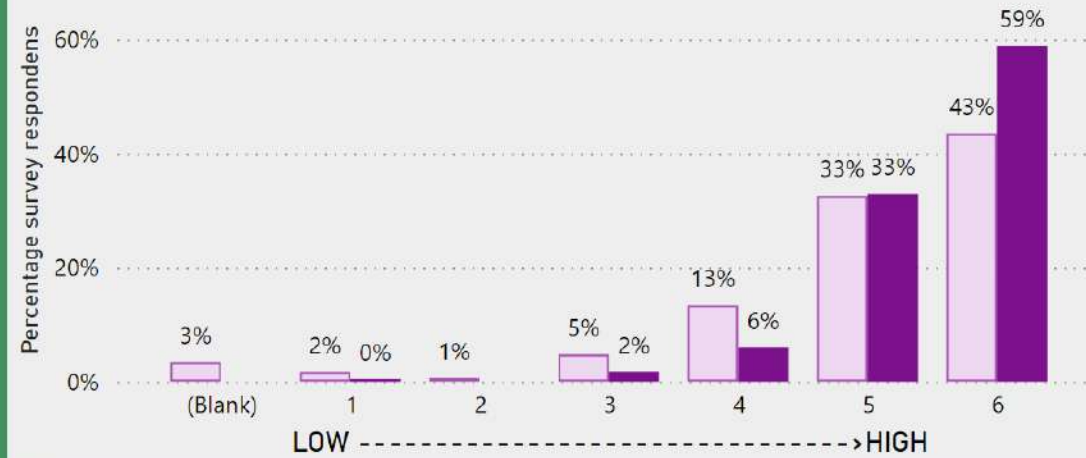
How relevant is Neurodiversity to your role?

○ Pre-Training ● Post-Training



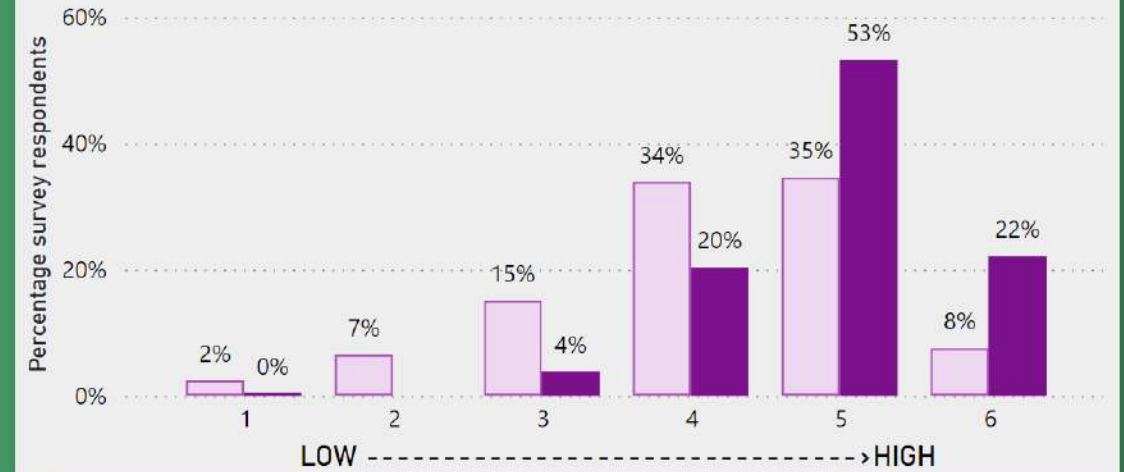
To what extent is embracing neurodiversity part of your role?

○ Pre-Training ● Post-Training



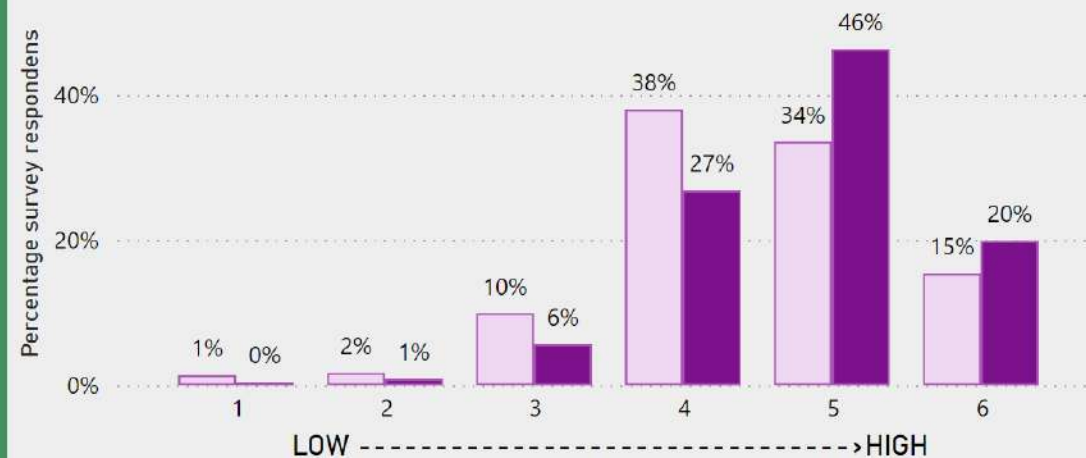
How confident do you feel implementing Reasonable Adjustments?

○ Pre-Training ● Post-Training



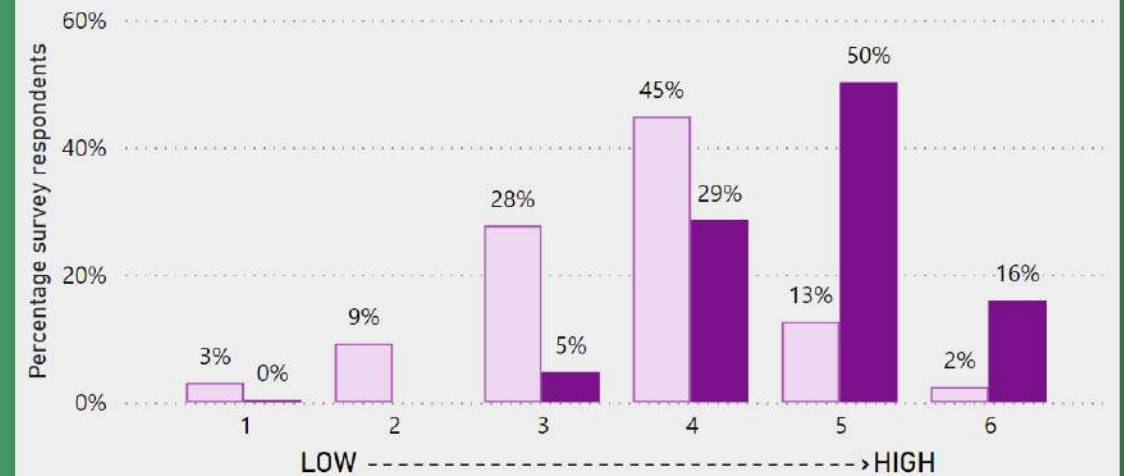
How Neuroinclusive are you as a Hiring Manager?

○ Pre-Training ● Post-Training



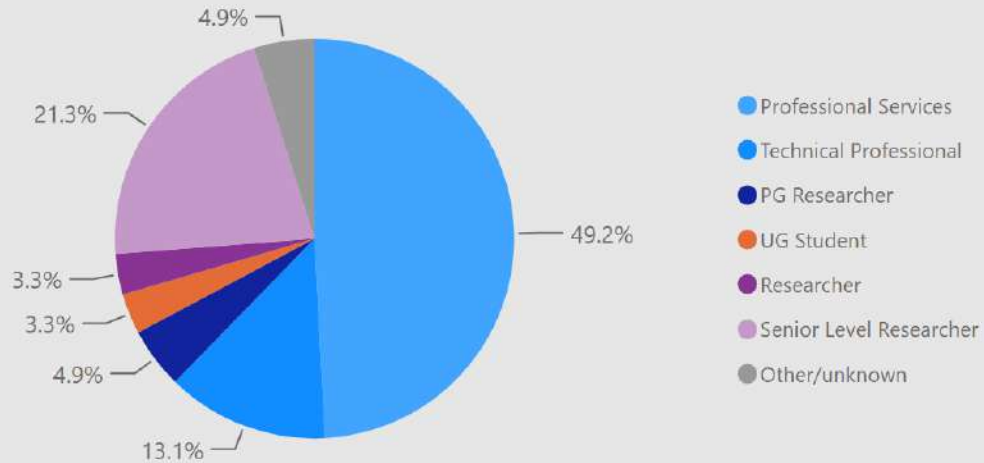
How confident do you feel managing Neurodiverse Teams?

○ Pre-Training ● Post-Training





What is your role?



Survey completions

Completion rates are determined from the ratio of individuals completing the post-training survey to individuals completing the pre-training survey

Survey Type	Introduction to Neurodiversity	Managing Neurodiverse Teams
Post-Training	40	24
Pre-Training	63	39
Total	103	63

Introduction to Neurodiversity

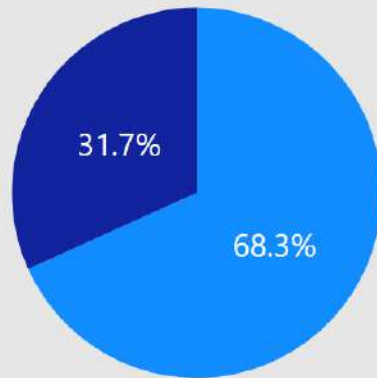


Managing Neurodiverse Teams



Have you done any Neurodiversity training before?

● No ● Yes



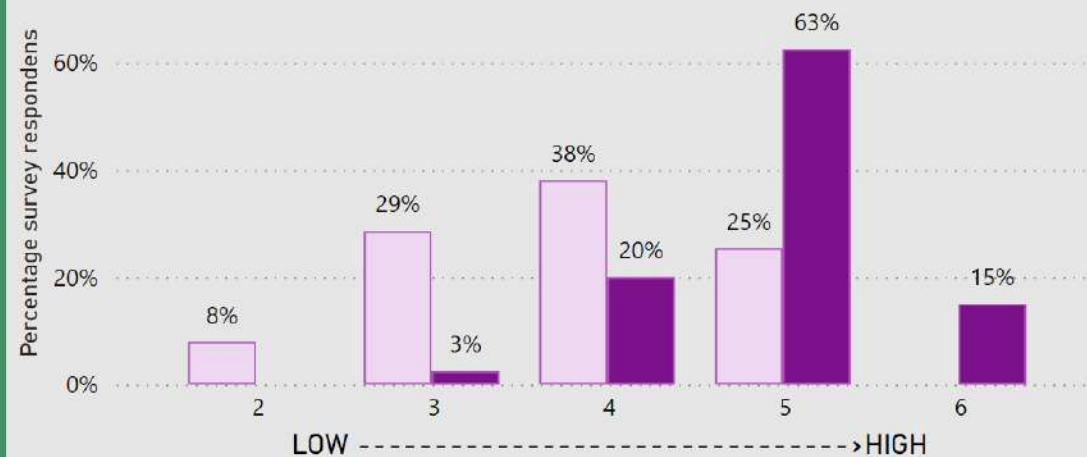
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○ Pre-Training ● Post-Training



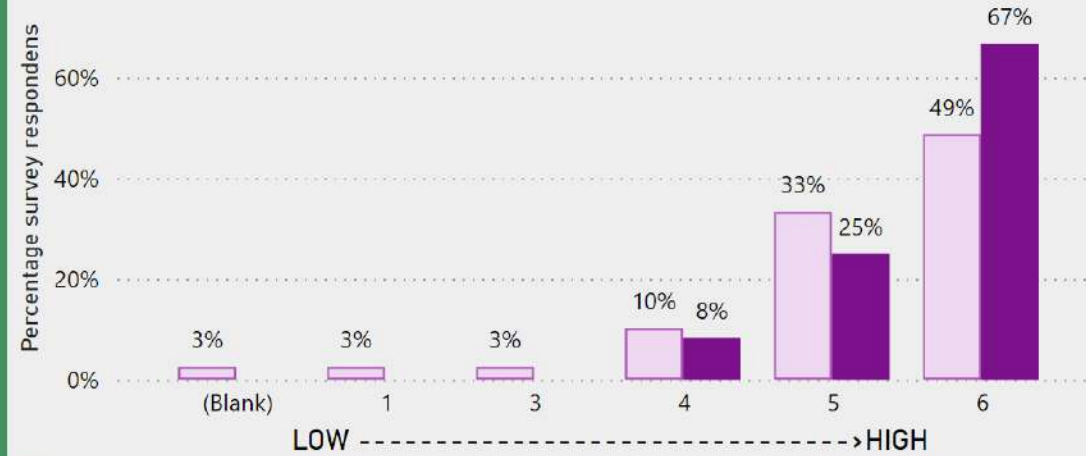
How relevant is Neurodiversity to your role?

○ Pre-Training ● Post-Training



To what extent is embracing neurodiversity part of your role?

Pre-Training Post-Training



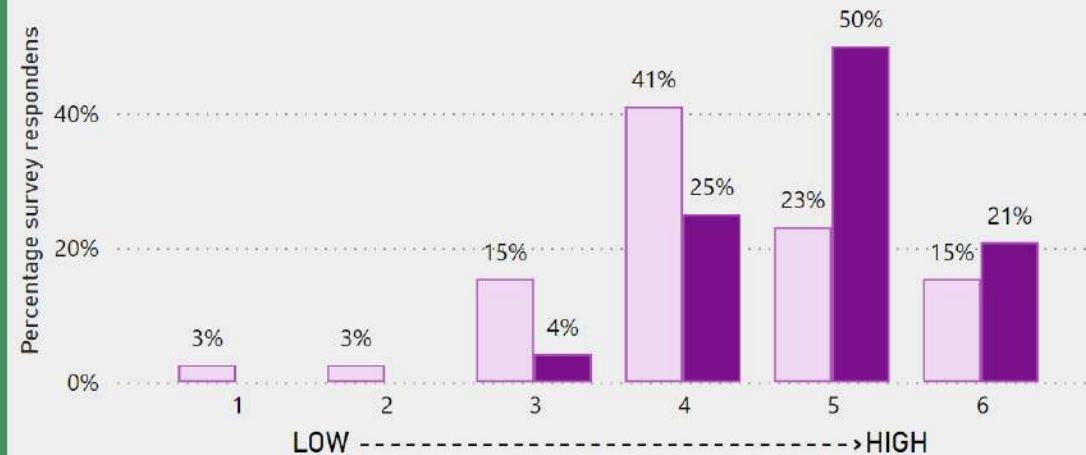
How confident do you feel implementing Reasonable Adjustments?

Pre-Training Post-Training



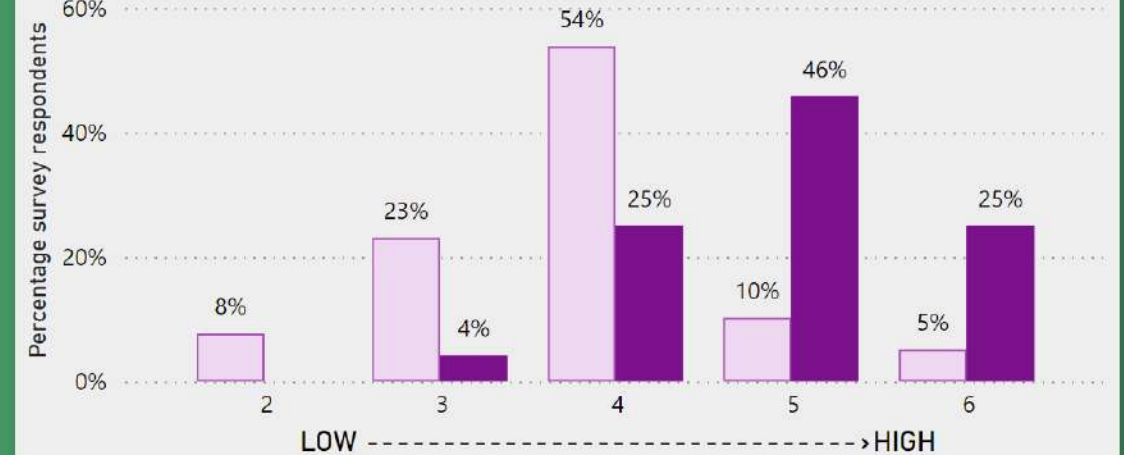
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Pre-Training Post-Training



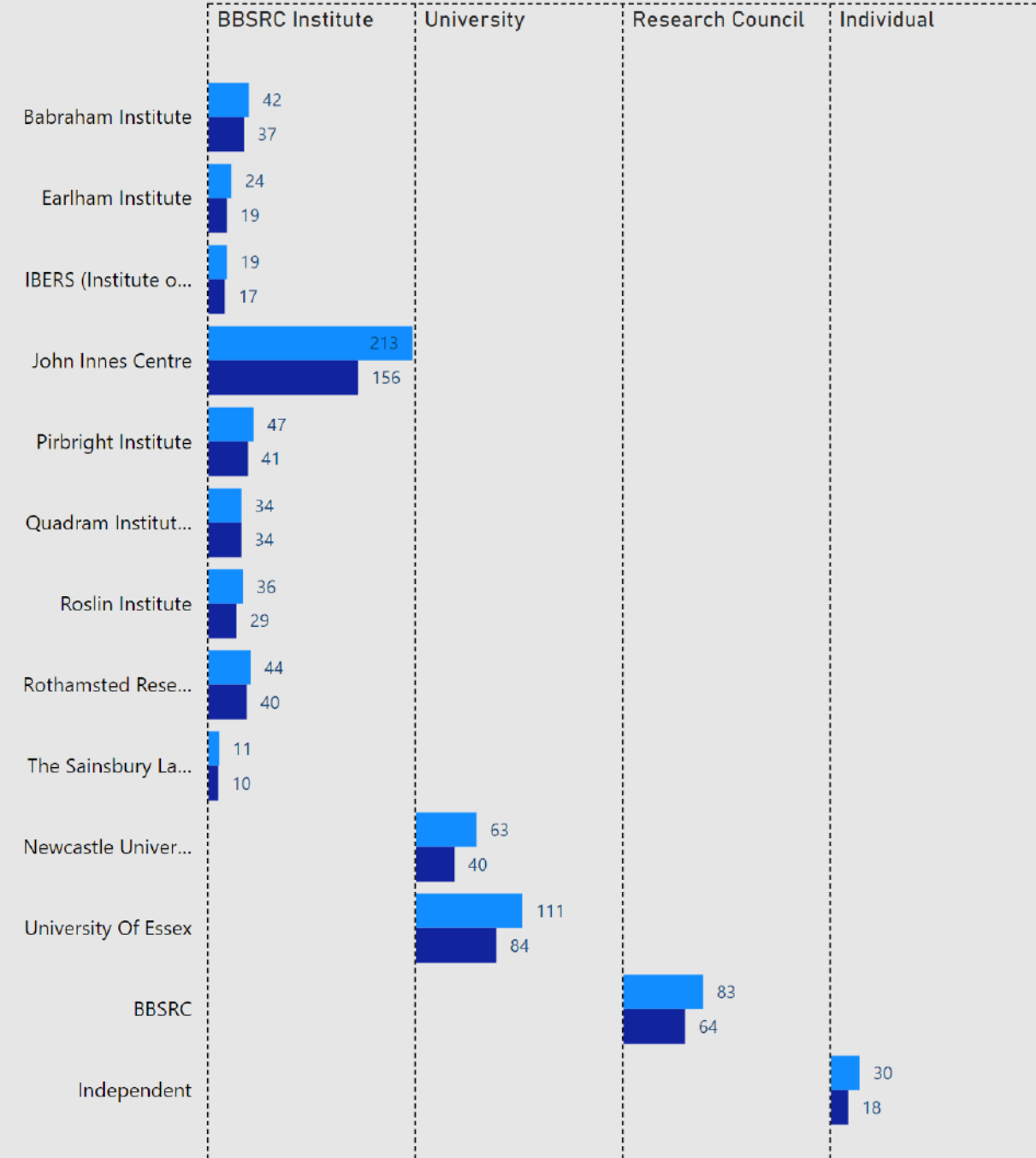
How confident do you feel managing Neurodiverse Teams?

Pre-Training Post-Training



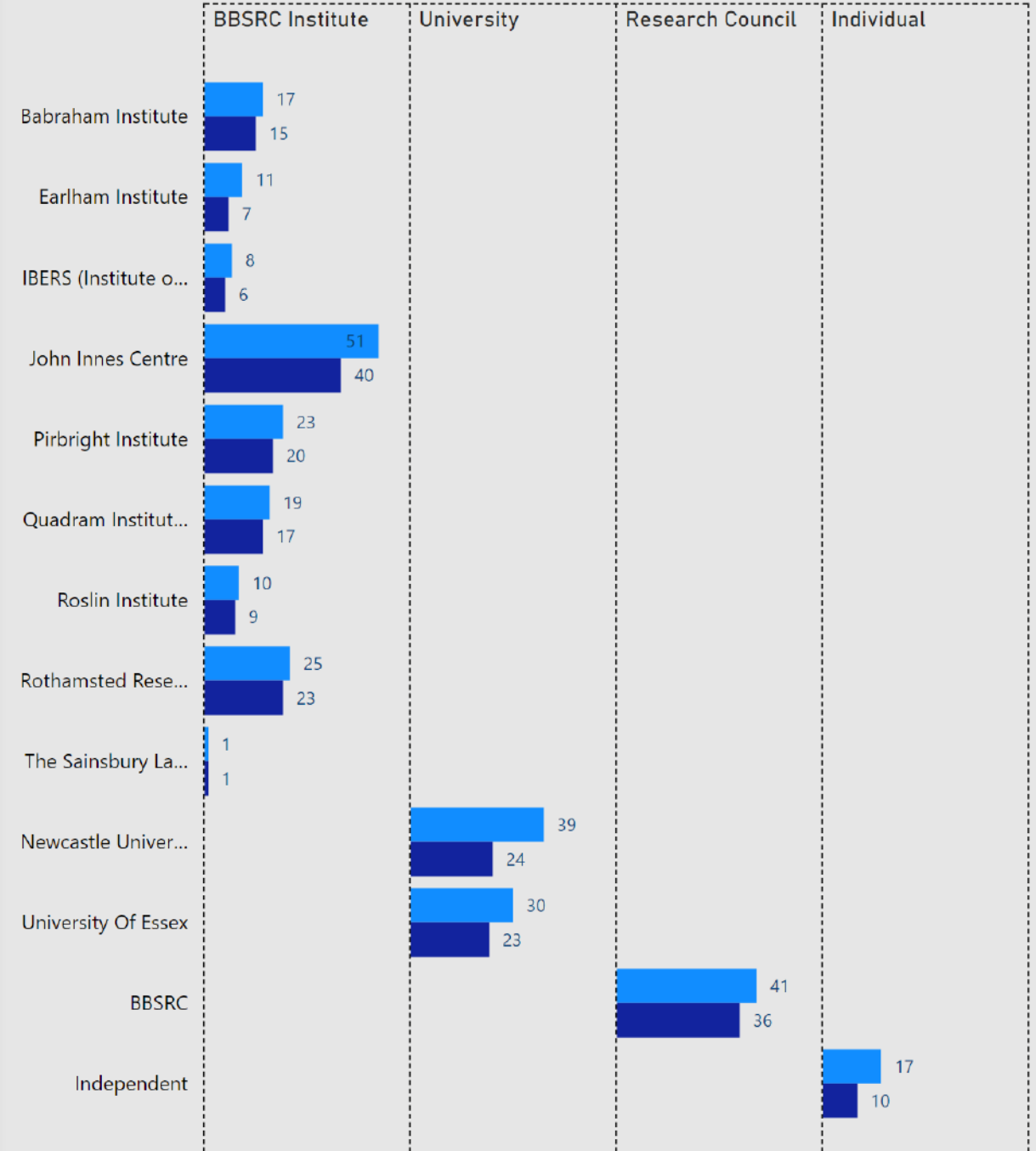
Intro: Neurodiversity

Pre-Training Post-Training



Managing Teams

Pre-Training Post-Training



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What next?

- JIC staff and students wanted to raise awareness on the impact of microbehaviours
- Pilot of Commercial training was for microbehaviours run in 2025
- Use neurodiversity training style to make our own bespoke training
- Also update our mandatory EDI training
- Applied for follow funding for this
- Grant written to work with University sector and broader science theme (EPMS)

The logo for EDI Hub +, featuring the text "EDI" in dark blue, "Hub" in orange, and a plus sign in orange.

The EDI STEM Training Hub

Cultivating Inclusive Workplaces Through Collaborative, STEM-Specific online training.

Scaling up proven EDI interventions to create a more inclusive environment across Engineering, Physical, and Mathematical Sciences (EPMS).

EDI Hub +

Lead Team



Key Partners



Specialist



Leah Milner-Campbell

Timeline



Scaling Success to Address Critical Gaps

- **Proven Foundation:** Building on the high-impact neurodiversity e-learning project which saw a 74% increase in self-advocacy for neurodivergent staff.
- **The STEM Gap:** Generic commercial training often feels "robotic" and lacks the context of unique STEM power structures and research cultures.

New bespoke modules will cover:

- Legal requirements of the Equality Act.
- Identifying and mitigating microaggressions.
- Practical active bystander guidance.

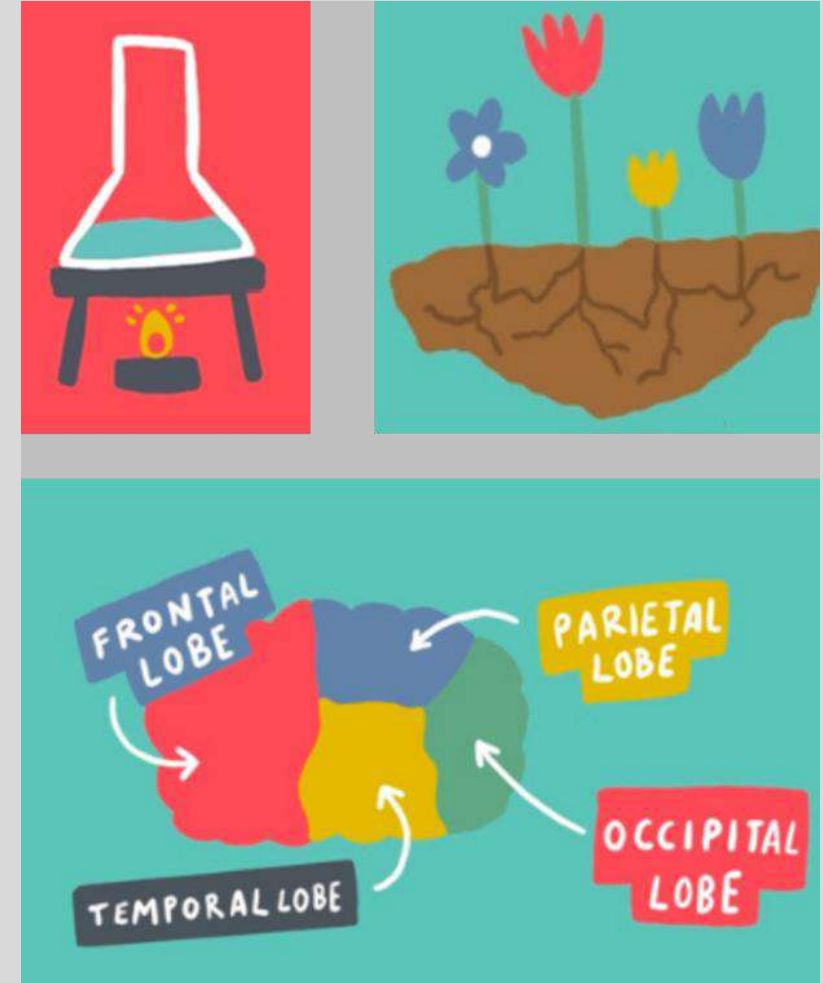


Illustration credit: Anna Rickards

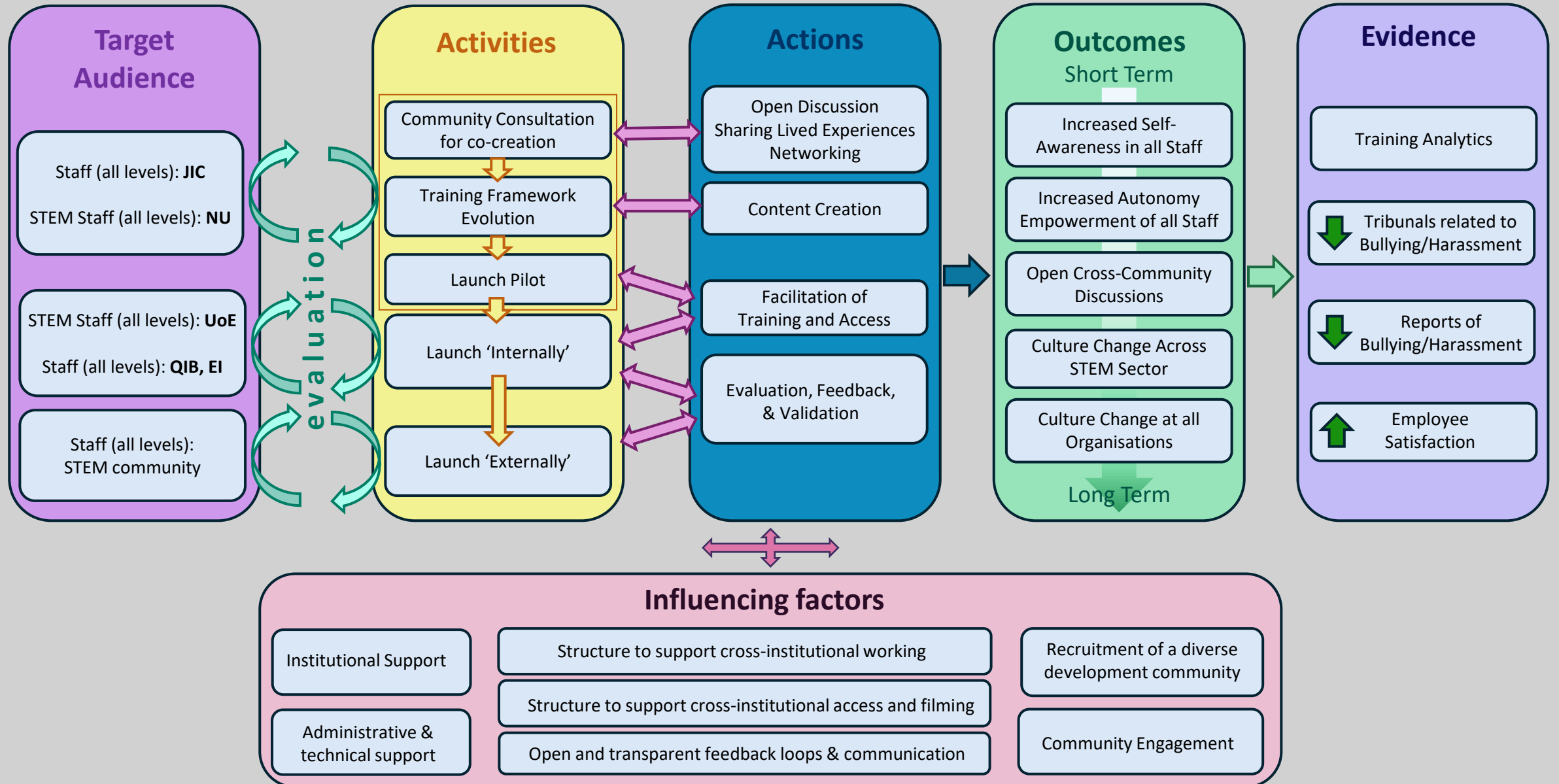
Our Approach: Collaborative Co-Design

Centring Lived Experience and Academic Rigor

- **Transdisciplinary Expertise:** Our team combines EDI specialists, senior researchers, and professional enabling staff.
- **Co-Creation Model:** We don't just "deliver" training; we build it with a community stakeholder group of 20–30 members to ensure relevance.
- **Authenticity:** Training materials will feature filmed scenarios and interviews with actual staff and students from our partner institutions.
- **Accessibility:** Content will be bite-sized, interactive, and designed with the latest accessibility standards.



Logic Model for EDI STEM Training Hub



Roadmap and Intended Impact

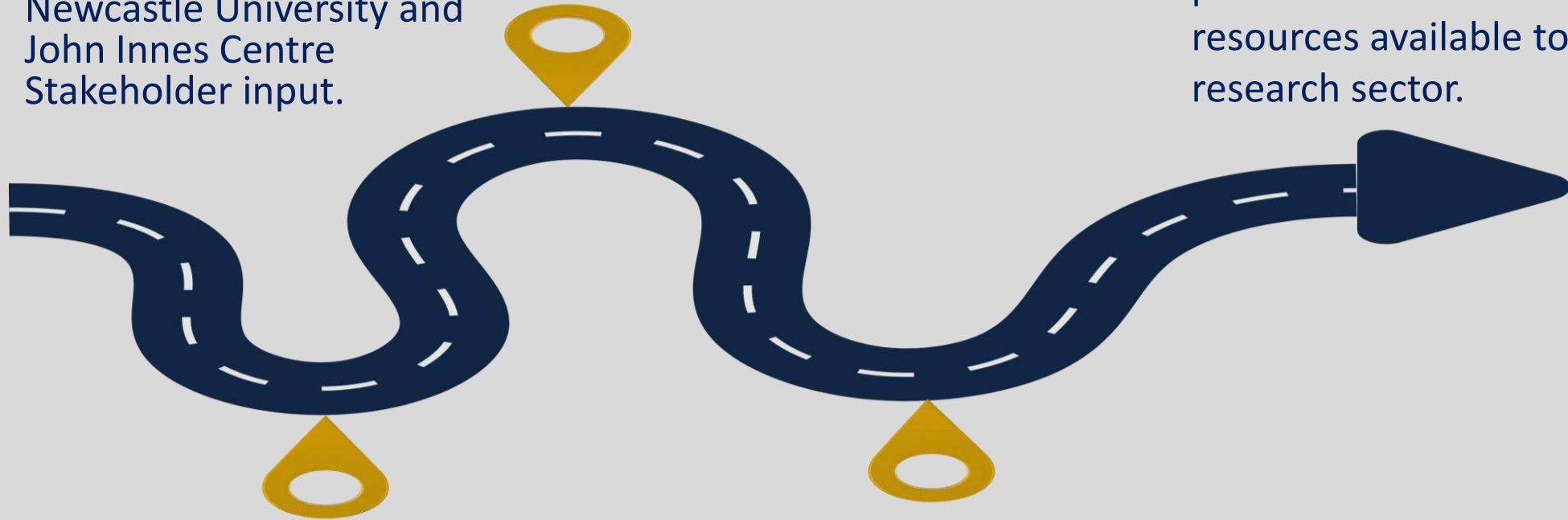
From Pilot to National Resource

Phase 2 - Q2 2026

Content production filming at Newcastle University and John Innes Centre
Stakeholder input.

Long-term Vision

Creating a self-sustaining, not-for-profit model to make these resources available to the entire UK research sector.



Phase 1 - Q1 2026

Ethics, GDPR, Collaboration agreements
Community engagement and establishing our stakeholder feedback loops.

Launch & Evaluation – Q3-Q4 2026

Official launch followed by a 3-month impact evaluation using quantitative and qualitative data.

Outline

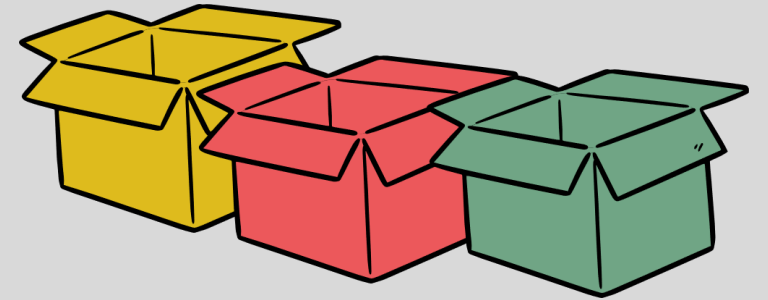
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Lessons Learnt – Professionally and Personally

Professionally from the projects

- Dedicated focus and resources were key to success
- Expert dedicated advice
- Co-creation with community
- Relevant bespoke training
- Work as a multidisciplinary team from day one
- Include your community - be authentic
- Different approaches work for different people
- Sharing of ideas and practice
- Use a holistic approach to communication
- Leave lasting resources
- Outputs and impact – design from the start!



Doer

Call to action

Available now



[Introduction to Neurodiversity](#)



[Introduction to Managing Neurodiverse Teams](#)



Launched in September

- **EDI in STEM Environments**
- **Moving from unintentional exclusion to intentional inclusion**



Thanks - any Questions?



Specialists:

Leah Milner Campbell, Julian Green, Renée Goulet & Anna Rickards

John Innes Centre:

Clare Stevenson, Alice Brewer, Sarah Tolland, Comms team

Newcastle University:

Candy Rowe, Khadije Badri, Julia Robinson, Zöe Hingston & Mel Leitch

Essex University: Christopher Spice

Quadram Institute: Patricia Hart

Earlham Institute: Siobhán Dorai-Raj



All staff and Students involved in networks, champions, stakeholder groups and filming