




Welcome to this month's *in partnership*. In this new look edition we showcase best practices from around the sector, look forward to all the exciting member benefits coming in the new year and get to know a little bit more about some of the fantastic people working at Advance HE.

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We share news and views from Advance HE and around the sector.



As always we welcome your feedback.

Please contact your membership contact or email memberships@advance-he.ac.uk with any ideas or content you would like featured.

Member Benefits

This month we look forward to webinars as part of the Generative AI: Beyond Assessment member project and publish a new podcast exploring the Supporting Inclusive Boards programme.

New podcast exploring the Supporting Inclusive Boards programme

A new podcast exploring the highlights and challenges of the Supporting Inclusive Boards programme has launched as part of Advance HE's Member Benefits.

The Supporting Inclusive Boards programme engages governance professionals in enhancing and sharing thinking.

In the podcast, Kim Ansell, Senior Consultant for Governance and Leadership at Advance HE and Tessé Akpeki, Senior Associate Consultant at the Wellbeing and Resilience Leadership Initiative, share the highlights, challenges and learning from two Supporting Inclusive Board programmes which have been part of Advance HE's member benefit offers over the past two years.

Kim said: "Our work with governors and professionals has been engaging and rewarding. We've had some great feedback about those two programmes which have equipped participants with practical skills to make a difference in the short, medium and long term.

"We've also heard how it's built confidence to try new things, to think differently and to recognise the importance of the role of governance professionals in implementing change to improve board diversity."

Kim and Tessé also look ahead to what comes next – an interactive workshop taking place in January 2024 designed to engage the audience in discussion groups to share learning and good practice in board diversity.

[Listen to the podcast here.](#)



What's coming up...

Interactive Workshop: Supporting Inclusive Boards – What Have We Learned

Thursday 18 January 2024 | 1:00 - 2:30pm
Kim Ansell and Tesse Akpeki will share challenges and learning from two Supporting Inclusive Boards programmes that have been part of our member benefit offers in the previous two years. They will ask what's next and engage the audience in discussion groups to share learning and good practice.
[Read more here.](#)

AI and Employability – What's happening beyond our walls?

Webinar 1: The Industry Perspective – 7 March 2024 10 - 11:30 GMT

Webinar 2: The Perspective from Accrediting, Public, Regulatory and Statutory Bodies – 8 May 2024 10 - 11.30 BST

The project will investigate how two groups of stakeholders anticipate the impact of AI on their respective sectors and what HEIs can do to prepare for the changing demands and opportunities that AI will bring in terms of student employability. [Read more here.](#)



Get Involved

HE is nothing without its people. Below are all the ways you can get involved and share your outstanding work with us and the wider sector.

AI Garage – Creating the Future Now

We invite members to share their innovative practices across a range of identified themes (including employability, research capability building, and student support), and we will use these to identify snapshots of leading practice and conclude with a reflective report that indicates the key themes and developments that have been highlighted and what this means for the sector.

[Read the introductory blog.](#)

[Share your case study and explore the current submissions to the garage here.](#)



Mental Wellbeing in HE Conference 2024: Better than rocket science!

Proposals are sought against any of the five thematic areas:

- + Effective collaborative working in student support across services, departments and teams
- + Curriculum-based wellbeing
- + Innovative outreach and collaborative working
- + Staff training and support
- + Staff wellbeing

Deadline for submissions:
Midnight GMT, 22 January 2024.

[Find out more and submit your proposal here.](#)

Employability Symposium 2024: Distilling The 3Es: 'What works and what doesn't'

We're encouraging submissions in three distinct areas:

- + **What doesn't work in the 3Es**
- + **3Es Discipline advocates**
- + **Replicating Studies**

Deadline for submissions:
Midnight GMT, 29 January 2024.

[Find out more and submit your proposal here.](#)

Student Retention and Success Symposium 2024

Colleagues are invited to submit higher education initiatives that address at least one of the symposium themes:

- + Learning environment and support services
- + Belonging and how we grow competence and confidence
- + Digital learning and technology for enhanced student success

Submissions can include case studies, research reports, and in-progress initiatives that appropriately support student success and retention.

We particularly welcome papers that are co-delivered with students.

Midnight GMT, 22 January 2024

[Find out more and submit your proposal here.](#)

Member Spotlight



MEMBER
BENEFIT

Barriers found in Deaf people accessing menopause services

The findings from collaborative work between Sarah Bown, an academic from the University of Wolverhampton and BID services, a UK-based charity, has resulted in exciting new menopause initiatives for Deaf and hard of hearing people.

New initiative context

During 2018, Sarah Bown, Senior Lecturer in Interpreting & Deaf Studies

www.wlv.ac.uk/courses/ba-hons-british-sign-language-interpreting/ approached BID Services www.bid.org.uk/, a regional and national UK charity for Deaf people to propose a pilot study, to ascertain the experiences and needs during the menopause of both Deaf people whose first or preferred language is British Sign Language, and hard of hearing individuals.

BID Services specialises in enabling and empowering those who are Deaf, hard of hearing, sight impaired, severely sight impaired or Deafblind to live the lives they choose and achieve their goals through delivery of specialist services.

In November 2018 two pilot workshops www.wlv.ac.uk/news-and-events/latest-news/2019/january-2019/the-change-of-life-project--deaf-women-and-the-menopause.php were conducted by Sarah in partnership with BID Services, focusing on the menopause as experienced by Deaf and hard of hearing individuals in Birmingham and Solihull, the West Midlands, UK. The feedback from participants indicated a greater need for accessible information and support across a wide range of ages.

Sarah found that despite existing legislation such as the UK's Equality Act 2010, Public Sector Equality Duty 2011 and NHS Accessible Information Standard 2015, the health inequalities experienced by Deaf individuals were well documented. At that time, amongst wider society, there was growing awareness and discussion about the

menopause, its impact upon people, access to specialist health care services/support and the understanding required during this transitional phase of a person's life.

Greater barriers than most

The successful pilot studies showed that Deaf and hard of hearing individuals faced greater barriers than most in fully accessing fundamental aspects of their care, being able to understand the process of that care, the treatment options and the knowledge to be able to make informed choices.

These initial studies led to the further gathering of data during 2019 across services managed by BID in other parts of the UK. The feedback, which was also posted on the Sign Health <https://signhealth.org.uk/resources/the-change-of-life-project-deaf-women-and-menopause/> website, overwhelmingly demonstrated significant need across different age ranges for: tailored education; advice and guidance; opportunities for Deaf and hard of hearing people to share their experiences together; learn about the menopause from appropriately trained medical professionals in a shared forum; receive support and, become sufficiently equipped in order to make informed decisions about their healthcare and lifestyle choices.

I am delighted to see the journey of this research initiative come to further fruition in this latest development by BID services for the communities it serves. It is the culmination of many combined efforts along the way, and it has been the greatest of pleasures to work with BID in an advisory and collaborative capacity across this period of time.

[Read more here.](#)

Advance HE Spotlight

Each month we share a little more information about the different people across the Advance HE team, that support our members. This month, we introduce our Consultancy team.

Victoria Holbrook – Assistant Director Consulting, Governance and Insight

Team members with job titles: Colette Fletcher – Head of Consulting and Governance, Amanda Aldercotte – Head of Research, Jonathan Neves – Head of Surveys and Business Intelligence, Peny Sirotopolou - Researcher, Anne Rowan – Researcher, Florence Reedy - Researcher, Dan Tinkler – Governance Development Manager, Nina Langlie – Strategic Consultancy Manager, Jason Leman – Surveys Executive.

What I do/the team does: I am privileged to lead our interdisciplinary team which develops and delivers Advance HE's consultancy and research to support effective governance and strategic transformation for our members and clients with inclusion at its heart and provides a range of sector and organisation-level insights and benchmarking including the student surveys portfolio.

How I/we can support you: Whatever the issue or context, we offer tailored and integrated support to help identify needs, work on what matters and co-create solutions that will deliver lasting change. That's because we have both breadth and depth of capability and expertise across education, governance, leadership and equality, diversity and inclusion which make us trusted advisers, as well as the partners of choice. The CGI group brings together the right people to deliver work such as board effectiveness and academic governance reviews, culture and EDI audits, strategy facilitation,

large-scale transformation blending consultancy with people development, or bespoke research and evaluation assignments to identify what works or needs improvement. That sits alongside our significant portfolio of student surveys at both UG and PG levels. This means our reach and impact is from 'classroom to boardroom' drawing on the very best of Advance HE. We also proudly work at sector-level, for example with TASO, the Disabled Students Commission and Wellcome Trust. Its a long list, and always interesting and rewarding work!

A little bit about me/the team:

1. One of us knows a lot about dinosaur bones!
2. We produce the annual equality in higher education [statistical reports](#).
3. The CGI group was formed in January 2023 to bring together our expertise and insights and add even more value to the sector. Our most recent recruit started in July 2023 and our longest serving members worked for our predecessor the Higher Education Academy.

Ways to contact the team, including social media: Via membership contact or any of us. Most of us can be found engaging in the issues of the day on [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#). Alternatively you can email governance@advance-he.ac.uk or solutions@advance-he.ac.uk, or feel free to contact me directly at victoria.holbrook@advance-he.ac.uk.



Other News from Advance HE

As a member, you might be interested in one of the development opportunities, project updates or events.

Advance HE publishes new framework for embedding employability in higher education):

A revised framework published by Advance HE will help to support employability in today's dynamic and ever-changing world of higher education. [Find out more.](#)

2023: Advance HE year in review

Advance HE Chief Executive, Alison Johns, summarises just some of the highlights of our work in 2023. [Read more.](#)



'Holistic approach to EDI' – project update

Dr Ruth Gilligan, Assistant Director for UK Equality Charters, provides an update on Advance HE's 'holistic approach to EDI' project which is entering a Discovery Phase. [Read more.](#)



Shape In Partnership

This publication is created by Advance HE to support our members, and we want to hear from you. Complete this **2 minute survey** to share your feedback or to tell us what you do and don't want to see in the InPartnership newsletter. [Share your thoughts.](#)

Showcase your Success Stories

We would like to hear from you about your good practice and impact, thought-leadership from across the sector or satisfaction of Advance HE products or services. We are open to all ideas and in any format, whether that be a blog, a podcast, a video, or a case study. We will work with you to get your unique story published in In Partnership.

If you would like to be featured in 'In Partnership', please contact us [here](#).

