UKRI's full response to Nature*'s request for comment:*

Professor Melanie Welham, UKRI's executive champion for People, Culture and Talent, said:

"We recognise that Black, Asian and minority ethnic researchers and innovators are underrepresented in the sector, including across our funding portfolio. Excellence in research and innovation requires a culture that values and supports different people, ideas and perspectives. We are committed to continued, coordinated and long term work to ensure we attract, retain and develop the best diverse talent and create an equitable research and innovation system for everyone.
Our work includes improving and better understanding the data, using these to design and then test interventions, and evaluating their effectiveness."

Actions UKRI is taking:

- UKRI, through Research England, and the Office for Students have funded 13 projects to improve access to research and change the system's culture for Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic students to access and take part in postgraduate research (https://www.ukri.org/news/improving-minority-ethnic-groups-access-to-postgraduate-research/).
- We are continuously reviewing our expert review and assessment practices, ensuring we have more diverse representation from across the research and innovation system and trialling different procedures. For example, NERC is trialling a new assessment process where funding applications will be not ranked but banded into groups, with the aim of improving the diversity of recipients and streamlining the process.
- UKRI is rolling out the Résumé for Research and Innovation (R4RI), an inclusive, flexible narrative CV template that allows people across the research and innovation sector to better demonstrate their contributions to the full range of activities needed for excellent research and innovation, better recognising and supporting diverse career paths (https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/resume-for-research-and-innovation-r4ri-guidance/).
- UKRI has also signed the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment, a common vision for the assessment of research, researchers and research organisations which states that assessment must recognise the diverse outputs, practices and activities that maximise the quality and impact of research and be based primarily on qualitative judgement (https://www.ukri.org/news/ukri-signs-agreement-on-reforming-research-assessment/).
- Within UKRI we will rigorously measure and share our performance and our progress towards our ambitions. We will use research, analysis and evidence-gathering on "what works" to develop and share approaches to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of EDI interventions, for example by sharing data and insights, and by experimenting and piloting through the Good Practice Exchange.