

Barriers to LGBTQI+ participation in research

Dr Andrew Princep

Lancaster, March 2020



TIGERSTEMM

[Home](#)

[Governance](#) ▾

[News](#)

[Resources](#) ▾

[Blog](#) ▾

The Inclusion Group for Equity in Research in STEMM

Key Points

- Within the LGBTQI+ community there is a varied spectrum of experience.
- There are specific cultural and structural issues that affect LGBTQI+ people, especially those who identify with a non-binary gender and/or as trans.
- There is limited data collected by the research councils in the UK on the experiences, funding applications, and awarded money for LGBTQI+ individuals in STEMM.

Institutional Barriers

Figure 7: Proportion of respondents who experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive or harassing behaviour because of their gender identity or sexual identity in the last 12 months, by gender

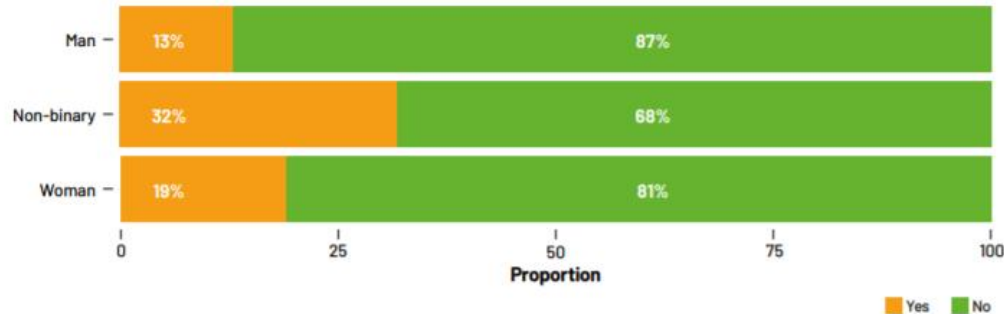
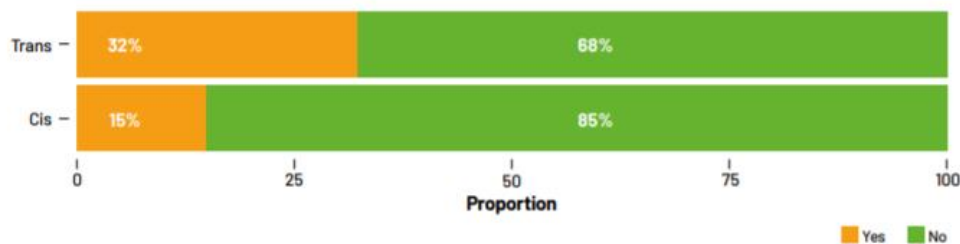
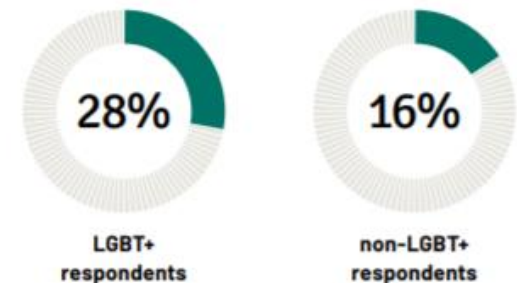


Figure 8: Proportion of respondents who experienced exclusionary, intimidating, offensive or harassing behaviour because of their gender identity or sexual identity in the last 12 months, by trans status



Respondents stating they had at some point considered leaving their workplace



Respondents stating they have considered leaving their workplace because of climate or discrimination towards LGBT+ people



Intsitutional Barriers cont

- Harassment is a significant problem, and highly intersectional. (TUC, Sexual harassment in the workplace in 2016)
- Casualisation is a problem in and of its own right, but this exacerbates harassment (Equal Opportunities Commission, 2002)

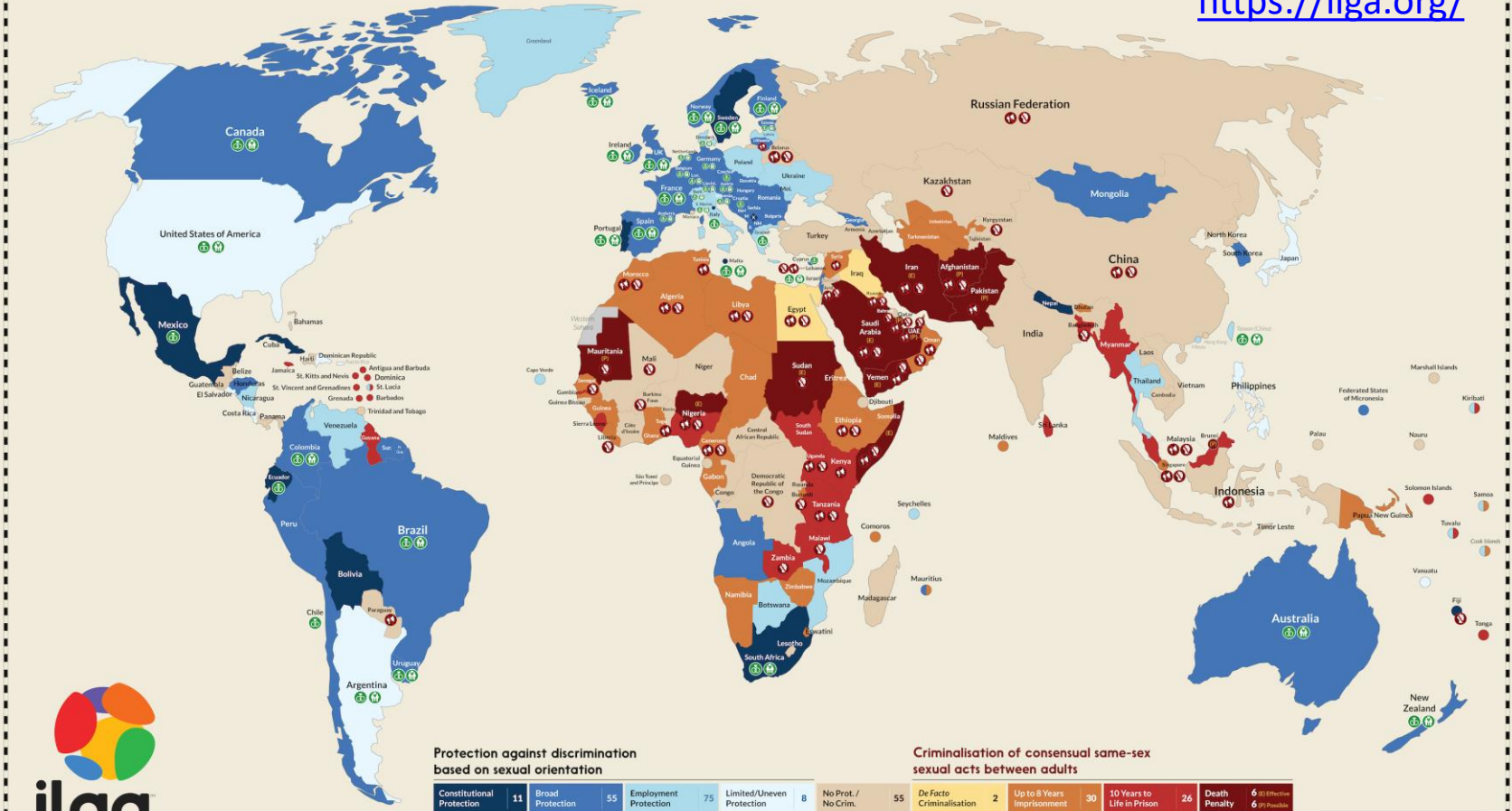
Professional Barriers

- **Name changing and publication history.** See also, job applications and CVs
- **Networking:** Success in STEMM can be dependent on having an international network of collaborators; indeed promotion criteria from leading universities have this as a key promotion criteria

SEXUAL ORIENTATION LAWS IN THE WORLD - 2019

From criminalisation of consensual same-sex sexual acts between adults to protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation

<https://ilga.org/>



Jobs

- LGBTQI+ people are less likely to be asked to interview for potential jobs in the UK (Drydakis 2015 [DOI: 10.1177/0018726715569855](https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726715569855)).
- Trans identities in particular are almost impossible to not disclose on an application

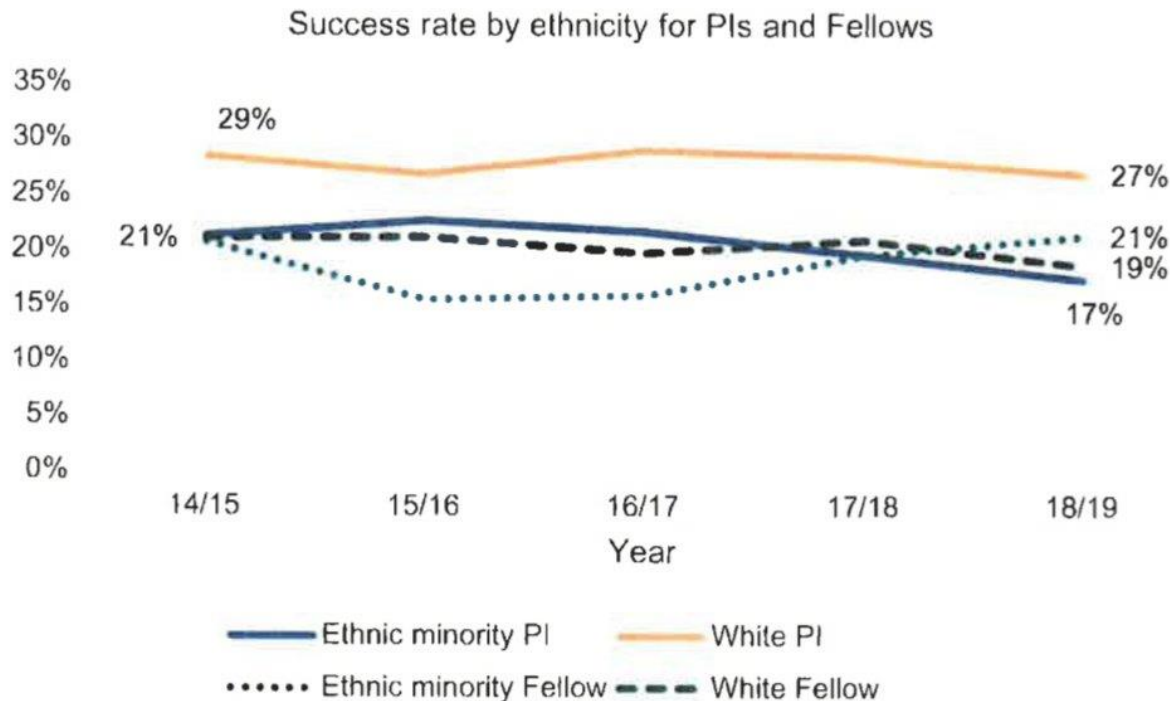
Social Barriers

- LGBTQI+ people are **four times more likely to commit suicide** than the rest of the population and experience **depression and anxiety at twice the rate** (Pachankis et. al. 2020
<https://doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000282>)
- Intersectionality is significant, and high proportions of LGBTQI+ people consider leaving STEM disciplines (IOP/RAS/RSC 2019
<https://tinyurl.com/lgbtworkplaces>).

Funding Landscape

“Direct barriers and dollar bills”

Figure 8



- "Sensitivity analysis suggests that we can be confident that this difference exists. It is not the result of chance variation."
- In 18/19, avg amount awarded to PI applicants from ethnic minority almost 20% less.

“Demand management”

- UKRI expects pre-screening of applications before submission.
- To date few, if any, attempts have been made to look at how LGBTQI+ people may be discriminated against during internal selection.

Interview Panels and Grant structure

- Interview panels are likely to discriminate against genderqueer/nonconforming or trans individuals, in the same way that women, people of colour, and the disabled are discriminated against at this stage. (Freeman 2018).
- The new URKI criteria pushing “Excellence in impact” poses significant risks for minority researchers

Further Trans-specific issues

- It is already known that extended career gaps for medical reasons are quite challenging to overcome, even though this form of discrimination is explicitly prohibited.
- Trans-specific medical issues routinely require extended medical leave. A non-negligible number of cases can lead to medium-/long-term disability or complications.

Best Practice and Positive Action

- Build a visibly welcoming STEMM community
- Review and improve policies particularly with to account for those at the intersection.
- Introduce and improve training
- All organisation should adopt a strong and *enforceable* code of conduct that applies across the organisation (including funding panels with external members) which protects LGBTQI+ and other identities

Thanks and further reading

TIGERSTEMM

Home

Governance ▾

News

Resources ▾

Blog ▾

Get Involved

About



Barriers to accessing funding

Barriers LGBTQI+ People Face in the Research Funding Processes

We present a range of structural issues and biases which affect access to research funding for those who identify as members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex and related communities (LGBTQI+), and we particularly focus in on science, technology, engineering, mathematics and medicine (STEMM) disciplines.



<https://www.tigerinstemm.org/resources/barriers-to-funding>