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Sent by email to: k.hackett@hefce.ac.uk

27th March 2018

Dear Kim,

Diversity and the REF 2021 sub panel for Sociology

Thank you for your letter of today confirming the composition of the REF 2021 sub panels, which also highlights that further panel members will be sought in 2020.

The BSA was pleased that HEFCE called for special attention to be made to equality and diversity issues in the sub panel nominations process for REF 2021.

We highlighted in our own nominations process that “The funding bodies are seeking nominations of candidates from a diverse range of backgrounds, institution types and geographical regions. HEFCE particularly welcome nominations of candidates from groups previously under-represented on assessment panels, including women, people from black and ethnic minority backgrounds, and disabled people. Nominating bodies are required to provide information about how equality and diversity issues were taken into account in putting together their nominations.”

To assist with this, and working with the BSA’s Equality and Diversity Sub-committee, we added a mandatory equality and diversity section to our REF 2021 application form.

In a recent survey (December 2017), we found that 15% of the BSA membership did not identify as white. Of this 15%, 12% self-defined as BAME, 2.5% preferred not to say, and 0.5% self-described in a way which meant it was not possible to identify whether those respondents were white or non-white.

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We expect that the figure of 12% is a reasonable indication of the proportion of BAME individuals working within the discipline of sociology in the UK.

Like HEFCE we are keen to see better representation of BAME colleagues on the REF sub panels and request that any underrepresentation is specifically addressed during the further round of nominations in 2020.

Thank you.

With best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Mudd', is written in a cursive style.

Judith Mudd
CEO
British Sociological Association