



Department for  
Science, Innovation  
& Technology



UK Science  
& Innovation  
Network

**Barriers within Barriers: Minorities within  
Minorities. The challenges for LGBTQ+  
Inclusion in the UK-US STEM landscape**

Prepared for

Royal Society of Chemistry

# Executive summary

## Key findings



# Contents

Boxes

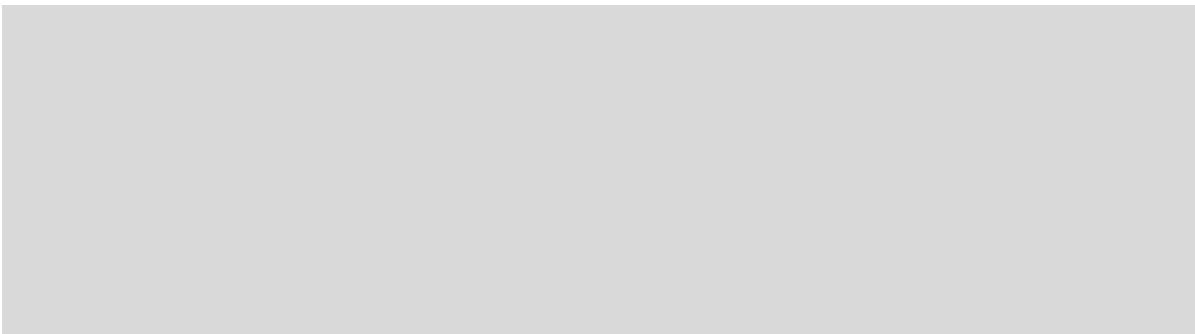


# 1. Introduction and project background



## 2. Research Methodology

### 2.1 About the participants









*It [change] will take time. We need this current generation to make our way through and into the workforce. Then to turn around and educate and mentor the next generations of LGBTQ individuals in how they can succeed (Climate\_122: Man, Queer, Trans, White, Biology, US).*

*Trans folks' lives are hell right now (Survey\_176: Woman, Bisexual, White, Multiple areas of expertise, US).*

*My past blue-collar environment was very welcoming to me, and not in a fetishizing way, either. They were really cool with me being bi, but not with the idea of trans people (Climate\_203: Woman, Bisexual, White, Multiple areas of expertise, US).*

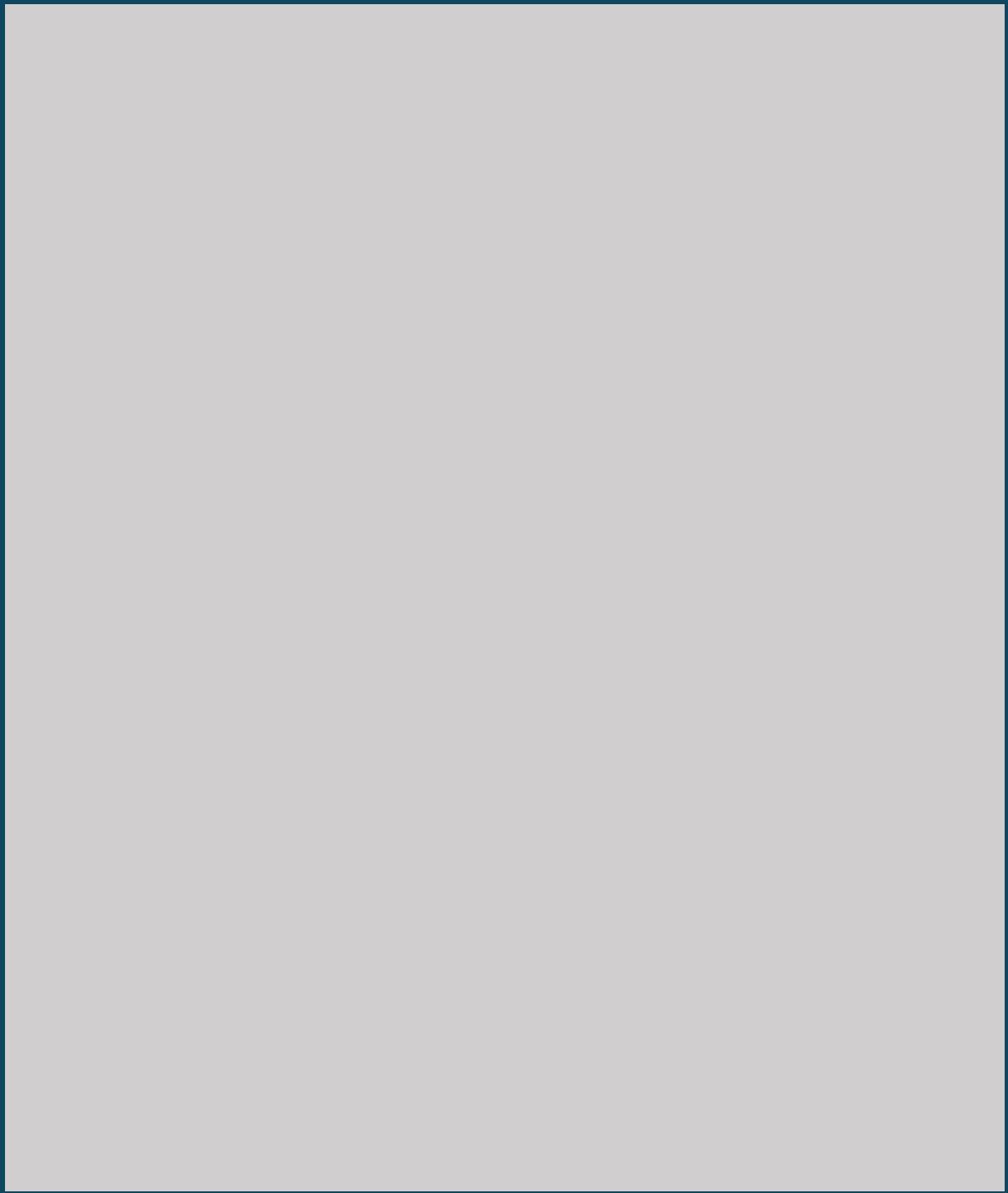


*There were some very transphobic comments made in an anonymised Teams meeting a few years ago (Climate\_062: Nonbinary, Asexual, White, Computer Science, UK).*

*Trans people still have some explicit barriers: e.g., being consistently misgendered during lab*

*The team is generally friendly but also quite un-diverse (ethnicity and gender-wise, and sexuality is*





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*There is often a false notion that recognizing identities and social factors leads to bias, as if one could remove everything that makes us human from scientific endeavours, when in fact it is the opposite. Acknowledging identity and social factors as valid factors makes science and STEM education stronger (Climate\_135: Non-binary, Queer, BIPOC, Multiple areas of expertise, US).*

*He's the like the definition of professionalism, of that professional old white man in a suit ...he's just so cautious in everything that he does and it makes it really hard to feel like you can ever authentically be yourself around him, even though it's not because he'll be judgmental, but it's because of the way that he presents himself, the way that he's very careful with everything and makes it feel like I can't just be my unfiltered, unedited self around him (participant focus group\_6).*

*My team appears to be very 'woke' and the leaders strive to be inclusive. But this is surface level / performative. 'Behind closed doors' experiences may be different (Climate\_082: Woman, Pansexual, Multiple areas of expertise, UK).*

*Company policy protects me only from overtly or demonstrably hostile behavior and does not codify how equitable conditions should be established or maintained (Climate\_172: Non-binary, Queer, Trans, White, US).*

*My department is silent on queer issues and the university acts in a typical CYA [cover your ass] way, paying lip service to queer issues without investing much time or money (Climate\_070: Woman, Lesbian, White, Biology, US).*







*The team in particular champions inclusion and respect, through having EDI leads who are happy to not just call out something that isn't right but explaining what is better and why. This makes the team so much more effective in being inclusive itself (Climate\_089: Woman, Heterosexual/Straight, White, Health and Social Care research, UK).*

*More basic training around social justice for middle managers ... they need to understand that structural biases exist and not to centre themselves when a marginalized junior colleague speaks up about their experiences (Climate\_082: Woman, Pansexual, Multiple areas of expertise, UK).*

*Our HR department puts so much emphasis on sensitivity training that it creates some resentment, and discomfort around LGBTQ+ folks (Climate\_139: Man, Asexual, White, Engineering and System administrator, US).*

### 3.4 The role of networks and communities

*...or it's even setting up networks or hosting specific events that*





*Sexism looks really different when it's through a lens of class or through lens of race. It's not all same. And I think that even in our best interest to make things more inclusive, we have to deal with those subtleties. So, you know, like in the US, there's a pay gap for women compared to men, right? That exists, but white women make X percent more than Hispanic women makes X percent more than black women. Or the relative frequency of people in STEM professions, right. Indigenous folks*



*Travel for field work can be more sensitive as sometimes study sites are in countries with lack of LGBTQ+ protections or active discrimination/illegality. This can lead to lack of participation by some marginalized groups in certain projects for safety reasons (Climate\_182: Man, Gay, White, US).*

*...another thing that's very practical is to confront the geographic issues. So, I've had times that major events were held in spaces where it is not safe for me to exist ...it is important to realise that going to a certain conference location is not always safe (participant focus group\_8).*

*STEM work is often multinational. Some cultures are more accepting than others. My Swedish colleagues are very accepting, my Indian colleagues are not comfortable with the concept (Climate\_215: Woman, Asexual, White, Environmental Sustainability, UK).*

## 4. Policy Implications and Recommendations





## 5. Conclusions









This research was carried out as part of the "LGBT+ Inclusion in STEM" grant scheme which is funded by the UK's Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and managed in partnership by the Royal Society of Chemistry and the UK Science Innovation Network.

Please cite this report as:  
Powell, A., Bolton, R., Sterling-Morris, R.E., Varrall, T., & Avila Torres, V. (2024) "Barriers within Barriers: Minorities within Minorities. The challenges for LGBTQ+ Inclusion in the UK-US STEM landscape through an intersectional lens – Final Report", Royal Society of Chemistry, London UK.



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