

Ref: UoS/OW/23/24/QTR1/EDI Consultant - EOI stage

Introduction and Background

The University of Salford would like to commission an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Consultant to work with the University to develop EDI design principles and a strategy that will inform estate upgrades, the landscaping and public realm strategy and all upcoming University Masterplan developments, with the aim of creating more inclusive physical spaces and resources on campus.

“Our ambition is to be a university where inclusivity is deliberately designed and embedded into all that we do, where every student and colleague feels like they matter and belong. Our culture and institutional values will support an inspirational learning and working environment which empowers people to lead with creativity and innovation that advances equity for all. We will be a university that dismantles those institutional structures and systems that lead to discrimination, removing barriers that stand in the way of achievement, and building our strengths in advancing equity.”

The above text is an extract from our EDI Statement of Ambition. The University of Salford would like to develop clear principles and a strategy for more clearly implementing EDI as part of the physical estate and the built environment for the existing University campus and developing campus Masterplan.

The University's Masterplan has been evolving for the past 5 years and sets out the long term vision for the University and the physical estate. We acknowledge that developing a strategy for EDI design is a challenge, particularly when working with an existing estate, however, we believe developing a built environment EDI strategy will allow us to continue to improve and develop.

EDI design is about making places everyone can use. It aims to remove the barriers that create undue effort and separation and enables everyone to participate equally, confidently and independently in everyday activities.

An environment should not, due to its design or management, present people with barriers in terms of their enjoyment of, or participation of activities within it. By designing and managing the built environment inclusively, frustration and difficulties that may be experienced by many can be reduced.

Masterplan Background

The 2018 University of Salford and Crescent Masterplan provided the University and Salford City Council with the first comprehensive and jointly developed vision for the Crescent, Adelphi and University districts of the city. For the University, the Masterplan provided a framework for the rationalisation of the estate, consolidation of the University estate into Peel Park and Fredrick Road Campus and the Crescent Innovation Development Zone and to enable the disposal of the rest of the University land and properties with the exception of Adelphi House. The Masterplan also provided a comprehensive plan for the renewal of the majority of the remaining campus. It also identified a need for investment in infrastructure, improved campus



connectivity and proposed a radical and comprehensive transport review, as well as further development of an environmental and energy infrastructure plan.

In 2020, a Private Sector Partner was selected to assist with the delivery of the Masterplan vision. At the same time a refresh of the 2018 Masterplan was undertaken by the University to provide a comprehensive and detailed estate and property strategy, spanning the next 15 years. The refresh reflects recent changes to the University's School structure and outlines an approach to illustrate how the current estate and campus buildings can be adapted or new buildings provided to reflect the changing needs of the institution.

The overall Masterplan vision is summarised in Figure 1 below. It should be noted that the Masterplan does not provide detailed proposals for buildings or spaces, instead it sets out a phased framework for development of capital projects.



Briefing Note for Expressions of Interest for an Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Consultant

Masterplan and Campus Built Environment Strategy

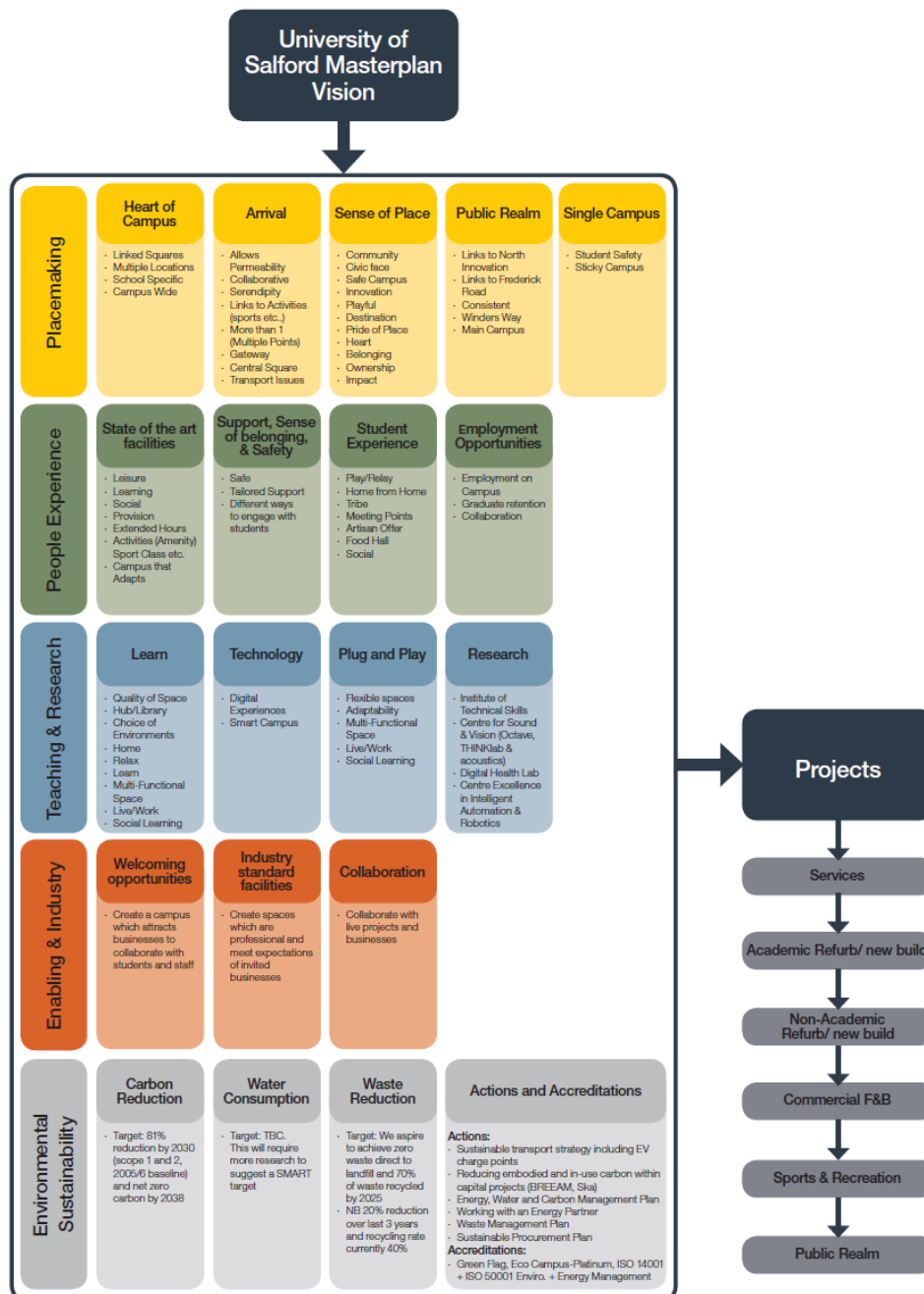


Figure 1 Overview of the Masterplan Vision

A further review / revalidation of the Masterplan is currently underway .

In addition to the University Masterplan, consideration also needs to be given to The Crescent Development Framework 2021 ([link below](#)), which provides a planning framework for the Crescent area that aims to create an inviting, attractive and unified place, which provides a range of quality new homes, generates jobs, improves knowledge and enhances the wider Salford economy. It promotes a radical improvement to public realm and sustainable transport, the celebration and enhancement of the area's wealth of green, blue and heritage assets and aims to establish strong physical connections between the University campus and surrounding



communities, to create a coherent, modern and connected place, which benefits existing and new residents, students, workers and visitors.

<https://crescentsalford.com/>

EDI Campus Design Strategy

An EDI design philosophy closely follows that of a universal design approach, which seeks to make all aspects of design completely inclusive and without the need for individual accommodations that reflects the diversity of the student, staff and community body. It describes an environment which caters for a diverse society, the widest range of people, and seeks to create physical spaces, products and systems which are accessible and functional for everyone. Making all users of a particular space feel welcomed regardless of ability, race, ethnicity, language, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, religion and other forms of human difference.

If we fail to consider these differences when seeking to upgrade our campus and for the Campus Masterplan design this is likely to result in a campus that causes unnecessary frustration and exclusion. The more inclusive a campus environment is, the more people are able to access it, subsequently helping to expand and enrich University life. Failure to create a more inclusive environment can lead to lower participation, less overall satisfaction and potentially worse outcomes for campus users and visitors.

Every design decision has the potential to include or exclude students, staff and the community. Simply complying with the building regulation standards around accessibility is not the ultimate goal of an inclusive design approach. EDI design is a process, whereas accessibility is one of the primary outcomes of applying such a process.

The strategy must be informed by and aligned with the University's corporate strategy and our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Statement of Ambition, which can be found on our website (link below).

[EDI Hub page](#)

In addition, note should be taken of the University's Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Annual Report 2023 (link below).

<https://testlivesalfordac.sharepoint.com/sites/EquityDiversityandInclusion/SiteAssets/SitePages/Home/EDI-Annual-Report-2023.pdf?web=1>

The Design Council notes that promoting equity, diversity and inclusion is core to their purpose to make life better by design, something we would support, as EDI design is about making informed design decisions, by better understanding the makeup of our student, staff and local community demographics.

To do that successfully, the University needs to consider how people differ, recognize that we are inadvertently inherently biased, and do our best to ensure that biases aren't influencing our solutions. Involving a variety of people in the design process, both internally, with staff and



students, and externally, with the participants from the Salford community and inclusive design experts, will help ensure we are not providing a campus for only one type of individual.

The Design Council identifies five key principles to achieve inclusive environments, as follows.

1. People First - EDI design places people at the heart of the design process.
2. Diversity & Difference - EDI design acknowledges diversity and difference.
3. Choice - EDI design offers choice where a single design solution cannot.
4. Flexibility - EDI design provides for flexibility in use.
5. Positive Experience - EDI design provides buildings and environments that are convenient and enjoyable to use for everyone.

Commissioning an EDI Design Consultant

Commissioning an EDI design consultant must begin with a clear strategy and business plan about what we are trying to achieve and explain links to the University's EDI Statement of Ambition, including a clear picture of our current student, staff and community demographics, plus our vision of the future needs based on the anticipated growth in student numbers in the coming years.

A procurement process that centres on our need for inclusive design experts as opposed to accessibility auditors alone is imperative.

EDI must be built into each stage of the procurement process, with a diverse group of students, staff and community representatives involved.

The aim is to create more inclusive physical spaces and resources on campus. To achieve this, it is proposed to work with an EDI consultant to develop EDI design principles and a strategy that will inform estate upgrades and all Masterplan developments and will, as a minimum, include the following, with the ultimate aim of undertaking an audit, developing EDI principles and plans and creating financial strategies for all physical spaces across the campus to ensure EDI is achieved for all individuals.

EDI Strategy content, note, list not to be considered exhaustive:

- Consultation proposals with students, staff and community groups.
- Undertake a holistic Masterplan Equality Impact Assessment, including data analysis and consultation results.
- Application to the built environment that the University's Estates & Facilities Department is responsible for conceiving, planning, delivering and servicing.
- Responsibilities for everyone engaged in the management and development of the built environment (Executive Team, Project Sponsors, project teams, maintenance teams, contractors, service contractors and partners etc.).
- Engage with the schools to ensure that inclusive design and inclusion awareness is a consideration through all operations and activities.
- Identification of KPIs to measure success, including how the University could influence the inclusive design agenda at local, regional, national and international level.

In addition to developing the EDI Strategy, consideration must also be given to the link to the work undertaken by AccessAble, particularly focused on physical access to University buildings on campus (link below).



[University of Salford Access Guides | AccessAble](#)

Expressions of Interests

Interested bidders are requested to submit an Expression of Interest document answering the questions outlined below.

1. Please outline your relevant experience of delivering similar commissions performed within the last 5 years providing details of up to 3 examples. **(3 pages)**
2. Please outline how you would approach the commission, based on the requirements outlined above, as well as your experience of previous commissions delivering an EDI strategy for an existing estate. As appropriate, please outline what you consider the key outcomes of the commission to be and the appropriate methodology to be adopted for successful delivery. **(3 pages)**

Interested bidders are requested to return an electronic version of their Expression of Interest return no later than 12 noon on 5th Sep 2023 to m.c.stanion@salford.ac.uk.

The purpose of the Expression of Interest is to gauge the appetite within the market to work with the University to develop an EDI strategy for the built environment on campus, as well as the upcoming Masterplan developments.

Following the Expression of Interest, the intention is to issue an open Invitation to Tender to interested parties, currently envisaged to be split on a 70% Quality / 30% Price basis.