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LEICESTER

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# Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



# We are Citizens of Change





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# Welcome from the President and Vice-Chancellor

Diverse in our makeup and united in ambition – we pursue excellence in knowledge and learning to transform our community, our world and beyond. We are Citizens of Change.

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in this exciting opportunity to help shape the future of one of the UK's most ambitious and forward-thinking universities.

I was delighted to launch the University's Citizens of Change strategy in November 2021. This bold vision commits us to: research-inspired education, world changing research and a focus on people, partnerships, and impact.

At the heart of this strategy are three core values: inclusive, inspiring, and impactful. These values define who we are today and the University we aspire to be in the future.



PROFESSOR SIR NISHAN CANAGARAJAH  
PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR

We believe equity, diversity, and inclusion are essential to creating a thriving place to work and study. With staff and students from over 100 countries, we proudly embrace a rich diversity of perspectives, beliefs, and approaches that enrich both our university and the city of Leicester.

Our recent achievements reflect this commitment to excellence. In the past year, Leicester has been crowned Daily Mail University of the Year 2025 and shortlisted for Times Higher Education University of the Year 2024 and The Times and The Sunday Times University of the Year 2025. We ranked 28th in The Times and The Sunday Times Good University Guide 2026 and climbed from 36th to 33rd in the Complete University Guide. We also secured a top 15 position for student satisfaction in the 2025 National Student Survey and recently ranked 26th globally for Research Quality in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings 2026.

In 2023, we were awarded an overall Gold rating in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF), signifying outstanding student experience and outcomes. This places Leicester among a select group of institutions excelling in both teaching and research, reinforced by our top 30 performance in the Research Excellence Framework (REF).

The REF2021 results published by Research England show Leicester moved up 23 places to rank 30th overall, one of the biggest climbs of any UK university. This is our best-ever performance in a research assessment exercise – a testament to the quality and impact of our academics' work and our vibrant research environment.

We benchmark the progress we are making in advancing equity and inclusion, and currently hold a Race Equality Charter Bronze Award (submitting for a Silver Award in July 2027), an Athena Swan Institutional Silver Award, and we are a Disability Confident Leader and a Stonewall Proud Employer.

We are seeking an exceptional candidate to provide strategic direction and operational leadership for the delivery of our ambitious equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) commitments. Reporting to the Director of Human Resources and working closely with the Executive Board EDI Portfolio Holder, the Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion will play a central role in shaping and embedding a culture of equity and inclusion across all aspects of university life. The postholder will be a member of both the University and Human Resources Senior Leadership Teams and will influence decision-making at the most senior levels.

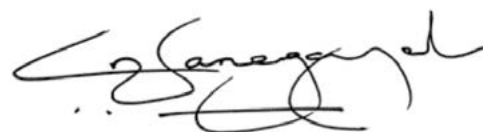
You will lead a dedicated EDI Team and oversee associated resources and budgets to deliver the University's EDI Strategy and Delivery Plan. This includes overall responsibility for statutory EDI reporting, equality duties and institutional benchmarking initiatives, alongside providing expert advice on EDI legislation and good practice. Through collaboration with colleagues, students and external partners, you will ensure that EDI is fully integrated into governance, policy, leadership practice and risk management, supporting sustainable and meaningful change for staff, students and stakeholders.

You will bring extensive professional experience of leading EDI in a complex organisation, ideally within or closely connected to the higher education sector. You will have deep knowledge of contemporary EDI challenges and a strong track record of designing and delivering long term strategies, policies and large scale projects. With detailed hands on experience across all aspects of an EDI function, you will be confident operating at both strategic and operational levels and advising senior leaders on complex and sensitive matters.

You will be an inspirational leader with excellent communication skills and the ability to influence and build trust across diverse groups. Your approach will be collaborative, evidence led and legally robust, underpinned by strong knowledge of EDI related legislation and best practice. You will be motivated by the opportunity to lead innovative and impactful work that advances equity, inclusion and belonging, contributing to the University of Leicester's commitment to being a progressive and inclusive institution.

This is a significant and challenging role for a candidate of the highest calibre – someone with vision, drive, and the ability to leave a lasting legacy of achievement.

If Leicester sounds like the place for you, and you have the skills, experience, and ambition to make a difference, we look forward to hearing from you.



**PROFESSOR SIR NISHAN CANAGARAJAH**  
**PRESIDENT AND VICE-CHANCELLOR**



Our reputation speaks for itself, with global recognition for our discoveries and contributions to advancing knowledge.

# About the University of Leicester



# The University of Leicester is a dynamic and inclusive institution, celebrated for our inspiring academic programs, ground-breaking research, and supportive community.

Founded over 100 years ago as a symbol of hope for the future, we are the only university in Europe established by its community as a living legacy to those who made sacrifices during the First World War. This is reflected in our motto, *Ut vitam habeant* – ‘so that they may have life.’

Based in one of the UK’s and Europe’s most culturally diverse cities, our identity and mission have been shaped by this rich tapestry. Students and staff from around the globe come together to engage here, contributing an incredible array of perspectives, beliefs, and approaches that enhance both our university and the vibrant city of Leicester.

We play a vital role in the regional economy, serving as a leading employer and an active supporter of music, arts, sports, and culture. Each year, we contribute over £360 million to Leicester’s economy, underscoring our commitment to the community.

Our commitment to excellence is evident in our recent investment of over £500 million, which has transformed our campus into a world-class environment with state-of-the-art facilities designed for the future. This includes the newly developed Freeman’s neighbourhood – a lively space for students to live, learn, and connect.

As Citizens of Change, our researchers are dedicated to tackling some of today’s most pressing challenges, from combating viruses and diseases to improving air quality, protecting our natural environment and promoting social justice. The diversity of our research reflects the rich variety of our community, creating a broad impact on society.

Our reputation speaks for itself, with global recognition for our discoveries and contributions to advancing knowledge. Our standing in the league tables positions us among the leading universities in the UK.

While we take pride in our heritage and accomplishments, the University of Leicester is resolutely focused on the future. Our spirit of discovery inspires innovative thinking, empowering us to seize new opportunities as we embark on our second century.

**16,778**  
undergraduate  
students



**£340 million**  
research portfolio (live grants)  
from over 250 funders



**5,099**  
postgraduate  
students



**4,215**  
staff



**31%**  
international  
students



**£396 million**  
turnover



2025 Statistics



# Human Resources

The Human Resources Division at the University of Leicester plays a central role in enabling the University's mission to be a truly inclusive institution and a global centre for research inspired education and world changing research. As part of the University's Professional Services, Human Resources (HR) provides expert advice, guidance and partnership across all aspects of the employment lifecycle, supporting a diverse workforce of academic and professional colleagues to thrive. The Division operates at the heart of the University's "Citizens of Change" strategy, ensuring that people, culture and values underpin institutional success and long term sustainability.

Structured across HR Business and Advisory, Recruitment, Business Support, Organisational Development, Staff Health and Wellbeing, Occupational Health, and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, the Division delivers both operational excellence and strategic impact. Its work is shaped by the University's Five Year People Strategy (2022–2027), which sets out clear ambitions to attract and retain outstanding talent, foster inclusive and high performing cultures, recognise and reward contribution fairly, and take an evidence based,

sector leading approach to staff health and wellbeing. The Division is known for its collaborative ethos, working closely with academic and professional leaders to enable change, strengthen leadership capability and enhance staff engagement across the institution.

EDI is firmly embedded within the HR Division's purpose and practice, aligned with the University's ambition that no citizen is left behind. HR plays a key role in advancing the University's EDI strategy through inclusive workforce policies, fair recruitment and progression practices, and a strong focus on dignity, respect and belonging. The EDI function operates at institutional level, supported by robust data, sector benchmarks and external charters, and works in close partnership with colleagues to challenge structural inequities and deliver meaningful, lasting change. This makes the HR Division a compelling and influential platform for the Director of EDI to shape culture, policy and outcomes across a complex and ambitious university community.





# The role

**Job Title:**

Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

**Salary:**

Competitive

**Department:**

Human Resources

**Hours/Contract**

Full-time, annual leave 27 days plus closure days

## Role purpose

To provide strategic direction and operational leadership for the delivery of the University’s ambitious equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) commitments, working in partnership with the Executive Board EDI Portfolio Holder.

The role will both lead, and contribute, to a range of institutional projects and initiatives, ensuring that they support the University’s approach to EDI, with the aim of creating and embedding a culture of equity and inclusion, which will contribute to the delivery of its overarching EDI strategic commitments.

The specialist knowledge, skills and passion of the role holder will ensure that the University is an innovator of deep and sustainable change in the way it embeds the principles and practices of EDI throughout University life, and beyond, for our students, staff and stakeholders. The role holder will be a pro-active and credible leader who works effectively and collaboratively to influence others to take responsibility for EDI and shape change.

Reporting to the Director of Human Resources, and working closely with the Executive Board EDI Portfolio Holder, the role holder will be a member of both the University and Division of Human Resources Senior Leadership Teams.

## Resources managed

The role-holder will lead the central EDI Team (4 FTE):  
EDI Manager (1 FTE), EDI Project Manager (0.4 FTE),  
Head of Equality Charters (1 FTE), EDI Coordinator (0.6 FTE),  
EDI Data and Engagement Officer (1 FTE).

## Main duties and responsibilities

- Provide strategic direction and operational leadership for the delivery of the University’s ambitious EDI commitments and agenda, working in partnership with the Executive Board EDI Portfolio Holder, including leading the University’s EDI Strategy and Delivery Plan.
- Lead the EDI Team, and its associated activities, budgets and resources, to support the delivery of the University’s strategic EDI commitments.
- Overall lead for all statutory EDI reporting, equality duty and internal reporting requirements to a high standard, including the annual EDI Report to Council, Pay Gaps Report and Statutory Equality Information Report.
- Lead the development, implementation and evaluation of a range of EDI project and benchmarking initiatives including the Race Equality Charter, Athena Swan Charter, Stonewall Global Workplace Equality Index and Disability Confident Scheme.
- Contribute to the core operational work of the EDI Team, including policy and guidance development, writing and delivery of training and supporting the Dignity and Respect Contact Service.
- Provide expert advice to ensure compliance with EDI legislation, statutory guidance, codes of practice and established good practice.
- Manage and support the University’s comprehensive EDI governance, policy and guidance structure, ensuring it remains fit for purpose and operating effectively in supporting progress to advance equity and inclusion at the University.
- Take lead proactive responsibility for identifying and managing the University’s risk in relation to EDI, having the necessary knowledge and networks in place to effectively scan for emerging risk, including in relation to societal, sector and legislative changes, and action planning appropriate responses, as needed.
- Develop and maintain excellent working relationships with key stakeholders across the University.
- Design, implement and oversee strategic programmes that enhance workforce representation and belonging,

and ensure effective measurement in place to assess and demonstrate impact.

- Maintain up to date knowledge and professional expertise to lead innovative practice and activity to support the University to be at the forefront of EDI best practice.
- Coach and guide senior University leaders and managers to make good quality and legally correct decisions with regard to EDI matters, ensuring that EDI is considered in all senior management decision-making by forging strong senior working relationships.
- Support the University in meeting its responsibilities and to operate in an effective, sensitive and inclusive way in high-risk areas of activity, including as a member of the University’s World Situation Group.
- Ensure that all aspects of the University’s EDI provision are fully compliant and align with its enhanced duty to promote freedom of speech and academic freedom.

### Internal and external relationships

- Executive Board EDI Portfolio Holder, Director of HR, President and Vice-Chancellor and University Executive Board and Senior Leadership Team.
- HR Division teams: including HR Senior Leadership, HR Management, HR Business Partner, Health and Wellbeing, Business Support, Recruitment and Organisational Development.
- Chairs of the Equity Action Groups, EDI College and Professional Services Division leads.
- Key stakeholders such as the Students’ Union, Standing Together Team, Student Support Services, Trade Unions and key professional service areas.
- External partners, for example, Advance HE, OfS, UCEA.

### Planning and organising

- Effectively plan own time and work and that of the EDI Team.
- To manage, lead, motivate and develop all staff within the EDI Team to achieve agreed outcomes.
- To provide effective leadership and management to meet outcomes, continuous improvement and the appropriate management of risk and other external factors.
- Assure quality of provision through benchmarking, keeping up to date with best practice and compliance.
- Lead on the development, coordination and implementation of the EDI Strategy across the University.



## Qualifications, knowledge and experience

### Essential

\*Criteria to be used in shortlisting candidates for interview.

- Extensive knowledge and professional experience of leading EDI in a complex organisation, ideally in or connected to the HE sector.\*
- Deep knowledge and understanding of the contemporary challenges facing EDI, including at societal, international, national, sector and organisational level, along with skills and experience to negotiate these challenges.
- Detailed hands-on experience of delivering all aspects of an EDI function, combining leadership, management and operational delivery.\*
- A strong educational background to at least Degree level or equivalent work experience.\*
- Proven experience in the design, delivery and success of long-term large projects, with the ability to manage several projects at once and take appropriate decisions independently.
- Strong dispute resolution skills and experience, ideally including a mediation qualification.
- Experience in designing and implementing strategies and policies.\*

- Experience of advising, influencing and supporting leaders and managers in addressing complex and sensitive EDI matters.

## Skills, abilities and competencies

### Essential

- Inspirational leadership and people management skills with proven skills in motivating and influencing people across all levels.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, with the ability to build rapport easily and present clear, well-structured proposals and documentation, including reports at committee level.
- Excellent knowledge and understanding of EDI related legislation and experience of seeking external specialist legal advice, as needed, and translating that in an organisational context.
- Effective management of finance and other resources to deliver priorities efficiently.
- Established skills in leading and motivating a small team in a complex environment.
- Ability to understand, analyse and present complex information sources (including data sets).

## Criminal declaration

If you become an employee, you must inform your manager immediately, in writing, if you are the subject of any current or future police investigations/legal proceedings, which could result in a criminal offence, conviction, caution, bind-over or charges, or warnings.

## Supporting university activities

As a University of Leicester citizen, you are encouraged to support key university activities such as clearing, graduation ceremonies, student registration and recruitment open days. We encourage all staff as citizens to work flexibly across the University if required. If supporting these activities is likely to affect your workload, please speak to your line manager in the first instance.

## University values

**Inclusive** – We are diverse in our makeup and united in ambition. Our diversity is our strength and makes our community stronger.

**Inspiring** – We are passionate about inspiring individuals to succeed and realise their ambitions. We challenge our community to think differently, to get involved, and to constantly embrace new ideas.

**Impactful** – As Citizens of Change we will generate new ideas which deliver impact and empower our community.

## Equity, diversity and inclusion

We believe that equity, diversity and inclusion is integral to a successful modern workplace. By developing and implementing policies and systems that challenge stereotypes across all aspects of our work, we have a culture that recognises and values the diverse contributions of our staff which benefits everyone. Our strong values of inclusivity and equity support our efforts to attract a diverse range of high-quality staff and students, and identify our University as a progressive and innovative workplace that mainstreams equity, diversity and inclusion.

## How to apply

Applications can be made through our recruitment system Eploy. Please click on the below link to apply:

<https://jobs.le.ac.uk/vacancies/13203/director-of-equity-diversity-and-inclusion.html>

The deadline for applications is midnight on 29 May 2026.

The first selection stage will take place remotely on **16 June 2026**, with the final selection stage taking place in-person on **9 July 2026**.

For informal enquiries, please contact Dr Angie Pears, Director of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion by email on [angie.pears@leicester.ac.uk](mailto:angie.pears@leicester.ac.uk)





# Living in Leicester

**Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland are rich in culture, heritage, and leisure activities, from our vibrant multicultural city, to the beautiful market towns and rural villages.**

Often described as the heart of rural England, the area features beautiful country villages, the National Forest, great rivers and castles and a cosmopolitan city centre, making it an exciting and diverse place to live and work.

Leicester is one of the UK's ten largest cities and represents the largest economy in the East Midlands region. It has a bustling and diverse atmosphere and recent regeneration (to the tune of £3 billion) has made this cosmopolitan city even more exciting. Leicester is home to the state-of-the-art Curve theatre, as well as large and multicultural festivals. It is famous for its diversity and offers an amazing chance to dive into many different cultural

celebrations. Leicester celebrates Diwali (the Festival of Light) with spectacular lights, stunning street parades and dazzling fireworks. This is attended by 35,000 people and is the largest celebration of the festival outside of India. The city also hosts an annual Pride Parade (Leicester Pride), a Caribbean Carnival and the largest comedy festival in the UK.

The University, working in close partnership with the city, has been the inspiration behind two of Leicester's most famous tourist attractions. The award-winning National Space Centre – the UK's largest attraction dedicated to space exploration – and the King Richard III Visitor Centre which retells the dramatic story of the University's discovery of England's most infamous King. Leicester is well-known as a sporting capital – hosting the country's best-supported rugby team the Leicester Tigers as well as Leicester City Football Club and Leicestershire County Cricket Club.

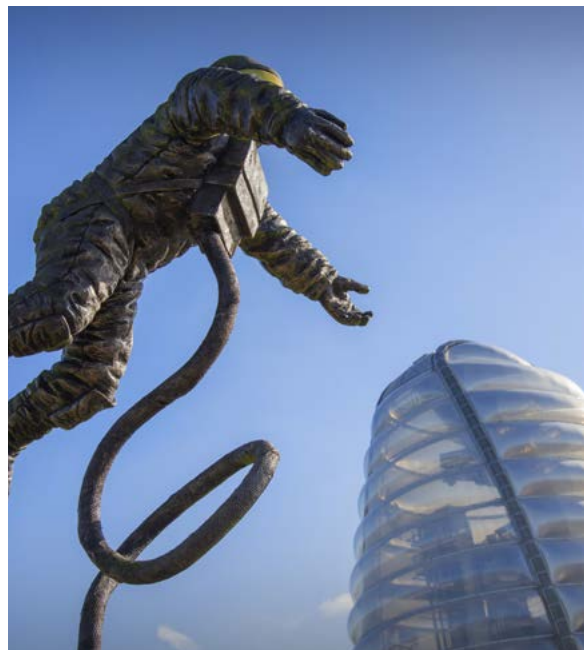
The city benefits from a large number of public parks including Abbey Park and also Victoria Park which is adjacent to the University. Leicester is steeped in history, dating back to the original Iron Age settlement which was to become an important Roman trading centre with a commanding position on one of Britain's



Leicester represents the largest economy in the East Midlands region.

most important routes – the Fosse Way. Leicester’s manufacturing industry reached its height in the 20th century, driven by world-renowned hosiery, textile, and footwear enterprises that shaped the city’s identity and powered its economic growth.

On Leicester’s doorstep is the National Forest, offering cycling, riding and walkways, adventure activities and some of the most impressive landscapes in the region, including Charnwood Forest and Swithland Reservoir. To the east is Rutland Water, one of the largest man-made reservoirs in Europe, which supports a wide range of water sports. Leicester and the surrounding region offer a wide choice of property to buy or rent. In the city itself, there is a diverse mix of housing and apartments. Both new and older properties, including substantial homes, can be found in leafy parts of Leicester within easy reach of the University. Alternatively, there is property available in the attractive villages and market towns in Leicestershire and Rutland such as Market Harborough and Oakham.





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