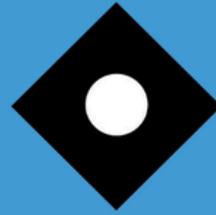


Work Package:
Diversity, Impact & Dissemination



ENHANCE Impact Workshop: Most Significant Change

2025 Annual Network Meeting of the ENHANCE
Diversity Office



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ENHANCE Diversity Office – Impact Workshop debrief

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We conducted an Impact workshop at the Annual Network Meeting of the ENHANCE Diversity Office. The goal of the workshop was to foster impact orientation by introducing the concepts of impact awareness and impact literacy. We engaged with the tool “Most Significant Impact” for measuring and communicating our impacts so far.

Part 1: Impact Awareness and Impact Literacy

ENHANCE Impact & Quality Officer Hannah kicked off the Workshop with a general introduction to the use of impact in policy contexts. This included a short recap of the ENHANCE Key Impact goals: (1) Education without Barriers, (2) European University for the Future of Europe, (3) European University for a resilient Society. In terms of our ambition with ENHANCE, they symbolize the dots on the horizon that we pursue by means of implementing and facilitating our joint activities. We talked about the need to make impact less abstract. One way to do so is by understanding impact in the form of a simplified formula:

Impact = significance + reach + stakeholders

→ To what extent does it matter what we do and for whom?

Part 1 focused on introducing impact awareness and impact literacy to further explore this understanding of impact:

Impact Awareness

Impact awareness describes the understanding and recognition of the effects of one’s own actions, decisions, and behaviours on individuals, communities, and on society. Within the context of ENHANCE, impact awareness encourages the consideration of how all activities contribute to the ENHANCE mission:

ENHANCE, the European Universities of Technology Alliance, brings together ten leading European research-intensive universities with a focus on science and technology. Rooted in European values, our Alliance of European Universities of Technology will turn global challenges into opportunities by empowering people with knowledge and competencies in science and technology, to drive responsible transformation for the benefit of society.

Impact literacy

Impact literacy describes the ability to understand, assess, and communicate the effects of actions, decisions, and behaviours on projects, or policies on individuals, communities, and the environment. Within the context of ENHANCE, impact literacy promotes a skillset that enables stakeholders to make informed, evidence-based decisions and to measure as well as interpret the outcomes of their work. Before developing impact literacy, we must have sufficient impact awareness.

Workshop participants were also invited to contribute their own understanding of impact:

What do you understand by **impact** in your work for the ENHANCE Diversity Office?



Contributions refer to a process: long-term change, make a difference, improvement, influence, dialogue, conversation, making a difference, progress, make a change, mindset change, culture change, and improvement.

Some refer to a specific outcome or component of such outcome: Happy people, understanding, awareness, DEI awareness, reach feelings, positive changes, realization, increased knowledge, and academic environment.

Participants were then asked to contribute their own experiences with measuring and communicating impact so far:

How do you **measure and communicate** this impact (also for your home institution)?

<p>You can not measure. And it is ok. But you can communicate indicators. My favourite: Impact is the steam of cooking water. You can communicate the steam.</p>	<p>Life cycle assessment (including social life cycle assessment)</p>	<p>Strategic documents like gender budget</p>	<p>Outcomes - outcome indicators Outputs (actions) - output indicators Involved and committed stakeholders (interactions)</p>
<p>surveys numbers direct in person feedback</p>	<p>Strategic and operational goals. Qualitative measurement</p>	<p>KPI, but difficult to come up with good ones</p>	<p>Percentage of completed activities</p>
<p>Policy communicates Outcome indicators Surveys Quality interview</p>	<p>Surveys and interviews</p>	<p>We look at the ratio of women at different Levels, we plan to ask female scientists about the work atmosphere. Students are asked about barriers.</p>	

Contributions range from focusing on communicating impact (“You can not measure. (...) But you can communicate indicators. (...)), on quantitative aspects (“gender budget”, “numbers”, “KPI”, “Percentage of completed activities”, “gender ratio”) and on qualitative aspects (“policy”, “barriers”, “actions”, “interactions”, “in person feedback”). The mentioned methods are “life cycle assessment” and “surveys and interviews”. We also talked about the relevance of impact pathways as a method to improve one’s understanding of the link between resources, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact.

Part 1 (Introduction of impact awareness and literacy) also referred to the **ENHANCE Change Agent**: Being an ENHANCE Change Agent refers to an individual or a group who actively participate in the co-creation of meaningful action to facilitate and promote change in their communities and organisations towards the ENHANCE mission. Change Agents are proactive stakeholders who encourage mutual understanding and who create an environment that supports diverse contributions to shared goals, while remaining mindful of the broader impacts of one’s work on colleagues, beneficiaries, and society as a whole. Change describes the process that is kicked off by acting on the transformative potential of the Alliance, as described in the ENHANCE Mission Statement. To give an example within ENHANCE context, the Gender and Diversity Representatives (GDRs) in all Work packages can be seen as Change Agents as well. Everyone involved in ENHANCE can be an ENHANCE Change Agent.

Part 2: Using the Impact Tool “Most Significant Change”

At Part 2, the participants engaged with the impact tool Most Significant Change. This tool focuses on storytelling, and it captures qualitative data. It is meant to complement the planned or desired impact with the actual experiences and interactions of stakeholders, thereby creating a fuller picture. In terms of timing it can function as a midterm review, identifying areas with (un)fulfilled impact potential. While we have previously dealt with the New European Bauhaus Impact Model in the past Impact Orientation Event aimed at a **holistic whole systems** approach to impact, the tool Most Significant Change focuses on **participant involvement**.

First step: We identified the **Domains of Change**. They are linked to the planning stage: What is supposed to change and what or who should be transformed by our work, according to our strategic plans and documents? Input was contributed by small teams of participants. Their input was sorted into **five domains**:

1. Culture & Values

- Promote bias awareness
- Promote awareness about existing barriers
- Rethink how to approach minorities
- Make ENHANCE more important than home university
- Find effective ways to manage change
- Find a balance between short-term and long-term change
- Set incentives to promote mindset change
- Promote awareness about privileges
- Promote personal responsibility and involvement
- Uncover and address discrimination

Corresponding DO Roadmap goals/ambitions:¹

- Promote IDE as an opportunity for change (General narrative), link between diversity and impact orientation
- Empower underrepresented groups through outreach (incl. networking) and ambassador initiatives
- Foster inclusive communication (through training) and peer-to-peer engagement (ambassador programs)
- Raise IDE awareness through educational offers (ILC-Offer for all target groups at our universities), public discourse (ENHANCE Lunchinars), innovative Learning Offers such as Anti-Bias Lunchbreaks
- Conduct annual Diversity & Inclusion surveys to identify and address structural barriers (Annually)

¹ As predefined in the ENHANCE Workplan, the Diversity Office Strategic Roadmap, and other documents used for planning and strategic purposes.

- Emphasize intersectionality and cultural sensitivity in all activities (Narrative)

2. Leadership Support

- Involve top management/leadership levels to promote culture change
- Explore the value systems that drive decisions
- Understand the incentives for decision makers
- Explore the catalysts for change
- Influence top-down opportunities for change
- Build on human empathy
- Share success stories to motivate others
- Foster evidence- and merit-based decision making

Corresponding DO Roadmap goals/ambitions:

- Gender and Diversity Representatives in all Work Packages
- IDE aspects in ENHANCE governance structures (Gender parity, charter, Memorandum of Understanding, Educational Strategy)
- Accountability through the Annual Diversity and Impact Report (incl. Annual Mobility Survey & Diversity Survey)
- Storytelling through Ambassadors, Public events, Dialogue Campaign in 2026

3. Inclusive Organisation

- Improve knowledge and foster knowledge exchange
- Slow down and build inclusive educational activities
- Improve gender balance for students and staff
- Act on inclusivity to foster inclusivity in departments
- Create support systems
- Build infrastructure that allows for inclusive interaction between people and systems
- Create inclusive systems to foster inclusive change
- Involve qualitative and quantitative methods
- Foster a happy environment to support learners
- Promote staff inclusion in activities

Corresponding DO Roadmap goals/ambitions:

- Disseminate good practice through Diversity Resources Centre (Public Padlet)
- Provide IDE-focused educational offers and micro-credentials (Anti-Bias Lunchbreaks)
- Constant monitoring of gender balance in our offers
- Diversity Seed Fund fostering bottom-up engagement
- We are also in contact with all other work packages to support and consult with them. Mobility for All Tool, Trainings for mobility officers
- Mainstream IDE (in strategic documents such as Charter and Memorandum of Understanding)
- Ensure staff inclusion through D&I Panels and ambassador programs; the panel is mentioned but not implemented yet

4. Inclusive Infrastructure

- Build inclusive and accessible IT systems
- Build inclusive and accessible building infrastructures

Corresponding DO Roadmap goals/ambitions:

- We aim to improve accessibility through WP9 on the new IT infrastructure.

5. Beyond the University

- Manage the embeddedness of university in society
- Secure (independent) funding opportunities

Corresponding DO Roadmap goals/ambitions:

- We aim at active outreach through STEM competition, STEM ambassadors
- We established Diversity Seed Fund to enable impact beyond academia
- We created the D&I Hub connecting all European Alliances.

Second step: Participants were asked to individually reflect on their own Stories of Change. This was about their actual experiences related to their involvement in the ENHANCE Diversity Office. They were asked to write about a change they perceived (in progress, documented, failed, cancelled) and the specific circumstances this occurred in. They identified the people who were involved or affected by it. Also, they focused on the significance of the situation to identify why this Story of Change mattered to them personally.

Third step: Participants were asked to sort their own Stories of Change into the Domains of Change. "Red" meant: This is the perfect fit for my story. "Yellow" meant: This is an okay fit. This led to the following distribution:



Domains of Change	Red (Perfect Fit)	Yellow (Okay fit)
Culture & Values	3	9
Leadership Support	6	1
Inclusive Organisation	3	3
Inclusive Infrastructure	1	1
Beyond the University	3	-
Total	16	14

In the scope of change, we can conclude from the ranking that the domain of Leadership Support has generated the most personal impact, whereas Culture & Values seems to be a relevant second fit.

Final step: Two participants voluntarily shared their Stories of Change. One participant talked about how motivated they felt because of the Women's Network Meeting, while the other participant mentioned the positive impact of the friendly and inclusive atmosphere in the Diversity Office on their sense of belonging. There was not enough time to do an extended round of sharing unfortunately.

Reflections

Personal impact stories mostly align with the parts of the workplan or roadmap that have been fully developed and implemented, which makes sense because those are the domains where most of the activities take place and where there is the greatest opportunity for personal experiences. This situation leaves us with three domains that have generated less perceived change: inclusive organization, inclusive infrastructure, and beyond the university. This may also be because personally perceived change can be too difficult to recognize, as it may feel too far away or too abstract.

There is an option to combine inclusive organization and inclusive infrastructure, which would leave us with four domains. The current focus is on knowledge-sharing, including good practice exchange and leadership involvement (see also Board of Directors October 2025) as well as accountability through bias awareness. There is less emphasis on in-depth organizational changes and related issues. It may be desirable to flesh this out further to get a better understanding of the existing potential for transformative actions. Are there more immediate measures already in effect (for example, how the Diversity Office conducts meetings or invitation and registration procedures) that could be mainstreamed? The underlying, bigger question: Is transformation possible without structural measures that address organizational infrastructures?

Another bigger question arises regarding what kind of organization ENHANCE is and what this type of organization can realistically achieve. Now, most impact seems to be perceived through the lens of the home institution and less so by focusing on ENHANCE only. It makes sense that this has resulted in less perceived impact.

Finally, as a test question for the perceived impact: Is it true that less impact has been planned (according to strategic Diversity Office documents) for the domains that have generated less perceived personal impact? If this is true, then there is no mismatch between planning and outcomes. This also means that the domains with most perceived personal impact point in the most valued directions for further actions. If it is not true, then there could be a mismatch between what has been planned and what has been implemented.

Melih's comments:

The positive aspect is that the Diversity Office roadmap represents the most frequently mentioned topics and aligns with the stated input. At the strategic level, new points were introduced in the first step, suggesting options for a new proposal, possibly in the form of a new strategy.