

# Hi, I'm Sarah....and this is what the Equality and Diversity workshop means to me.

Hi, I'm Sarah and I'm Treasurer for the Equality and Diversity Special Interest Group and one of the organisers of our [Equality and Diversity in Context workshop](#) and this year's [CIfA Conference](#). We are really looking forward to the workshop, and we hope that many of you will join us there.

I didn't attend the Glass Ceiling session at the 2015 CIfA Conference but I did follow the Twitter discussion that was unfolding alongside it. It was full of emotion, of people saying 'me too' and a desire to change the status quo. When I heard people wanted to set up a CIfA special interest group (SIG) about equality and diversity I volunteered to join the committee, even offering to be Treasurer. I want to make a difference and this seems like one way to do that – a pretty good way in fact!

My knowledge and experience of the many and varied issues surrounding equality and diversity is not as good as it should be. I have a lot to learn. Only the other day I found out through a discussion on Twitter that there can be difficulties with field school dormitory accommodation for binary and transgender students. I will be honest, it did not occur to me. Had I not been involved in this group it probably never would have. Many of the issues facing us could be resolved through better awareness. The Equality and Diversity in Context Workshop is just one of the ways we will be raising awareness.

At the point we started to design the workshop the SIG was still not 'official'. We knew we wanted a presence at the 2016 conference, regardless of the outcome of our application to form the group. We wanted to follow up the Glass Ceiling session – show that there was still a need for these discussions. A workshop seemed like a good way to do this. Rather than have people talk at you, we wanted to start a dialogue with you. It is

also an opportunity to explore some of the themes of Equality and Diversity with specific examples from our sector in what we hope will be an accessible format.

## **'put your burning questions to our experts'**

The workshop looks at three specific themes concerning Equality and Diversity: - Gender, Disability and LGBT (Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Transgender). With only one day for the workshop, we had to make a choice about what to concentrate on for this one event. This does not mean we will only look at these issues as a special interest group! More events and activities are planned. With limited time, we had to choose only three topics and we thought these were a good place to start.

We have three very exciting speakers presenting a brief introduction to each theme. Doug Rocks-McQueen, Landward Research Ltd, will kick things off by placing gender in the context of our sector. What do we know? Where do we need further research? Theresa O'Mahony, UCL, will explore issues around disability and share with us her thoughts from her current research - Archaeology for All. Finally, Dr Alan Greaves, University of Liverpool, will look at the theme of LGBT, including the experiences of LGBT people in the workplace.

The key part of the workshop will be the discussion sessions. This is your chance to explore the issues, become more aware of them and suggest solutions for you, employers and the Equality and Diversity SIG to take forward. Participants will be encouraged to propose 'actions' that can be taken forward.

We will wrap up the day with a Q&A session with all our speakers and Dr Hannah Cobb, University of Manchester, and Chair of the Equality and Diversity SIG. This will be your

chance to put your burning questions to our experts and tell us what you think the Equality and Diversity SIG priorities should be.

**So, if you are attending the conference on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April and haven't chosen which session you are doing yet – sign up for our workshop!**