



Beyond Compliance: Reclaiming the Ethical Meaning of Inclusiveness in Research

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OUTLINE



- Why inclusion matters
- What real inclusion looks like
- What goes wrong without it
- What we can do to improve
- How APPROACH puts this into practice



Why This Topic Matters

- Inclusiveness is too often reduced to an administrative obligation
- Yet at its core, it is an ethical commitment and a scientific necessity
- When we treat inclusiveness as KPIs and checkboxes, we strip it of purpose
- The real cost is subtle: weakened culture, missed perspectives, and poorer research decisions



Compliance vs. Real Inclusion

- **Compliance asks:** “Did we submit the document?”, “Is the table complete?”, “Did we meet the quota?”
- **Ethics asks:** “Are people genuinely shaping the work?”, “Who has influence, and who is unheard?”
- **Science asks:** “Whose perspective are we missing?”, “What assumptions go unchallenged because someone stayed silent?”

The Cost of Symbolic Inclusion

- **Presence without power:** people are “included” but not heard
- **Decisions shaped by the same voices:** narrow viewpoints dominate
- **Blind spots multiply:** assumptions go unchallenged
- **Innovation shrinks:** homogeneity limits creativity and problem-solving
- **Teams lose trust:** participative, not genuine



Why Inclusion Makes Our Science Stronger

- Diverse perspectives strengthen scientific reasoning
- Assumptions are exposed and questioned
- Bias is reduced through multiple viewpoints
- Methods become more robust and relevant
- Findings gain credibility, depth, and real-world impact



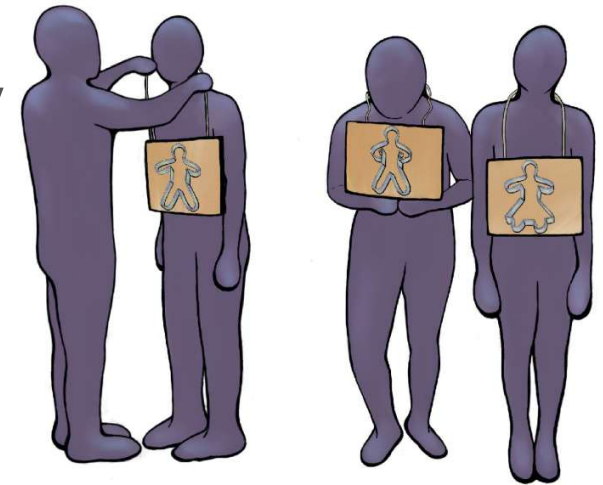
Inclusion as Shared Power

- Inclusion is not task distribution, it is power distribution
- Influence matters more than presence
- Who frames the questions we work on?
- Who shapes the decisions that guide the project?
- Who feels safe enough to disagree openly?
- Whose voice changes the direction, and whose stays unheard?



We Must Name the Real Barriers

- Constant time pressure and overloaded teams
- Dominant voices shaping discussions, often unintentionally
- Rigid hierarchies that silence valuable perspectives
- Cultural or linguistic communication differences
- Fear of judgment, conflict, or “not sounding expert enough”
- Emotional fatigue that limits participation



Practical Actions That Work

Small, deliberate actions that create real change:

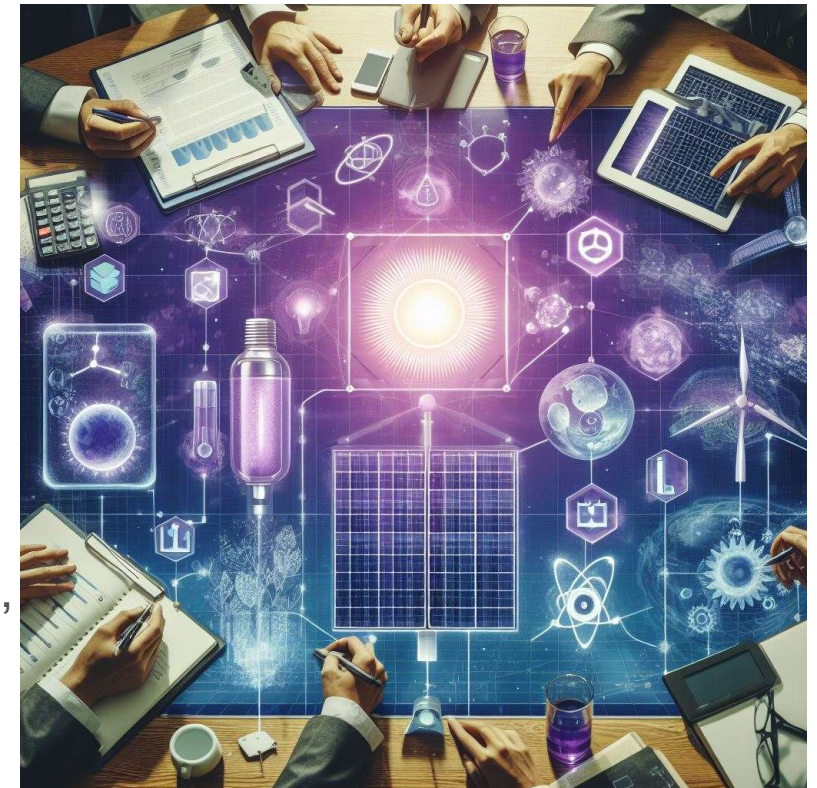
- **Rotate leadership roles:** Share influence, not just tasks; let different voices lead.
- **Build “slow-voice” moments into meetings:** Give space for quieter thinkers to contribute without interruption.
- **Invite structured disagreement:** Ask intentionally: “What risk or alternative are we missing?”
- **Map missing perspectives early:** Identify who is affected but not represented from the very start.
- **Make decision-making transparent:** Explain why choices are made to build trust and fairness.
- **Support the emotional climate of the team:** Acknowledge workload, stress, and



The APPROACH Project

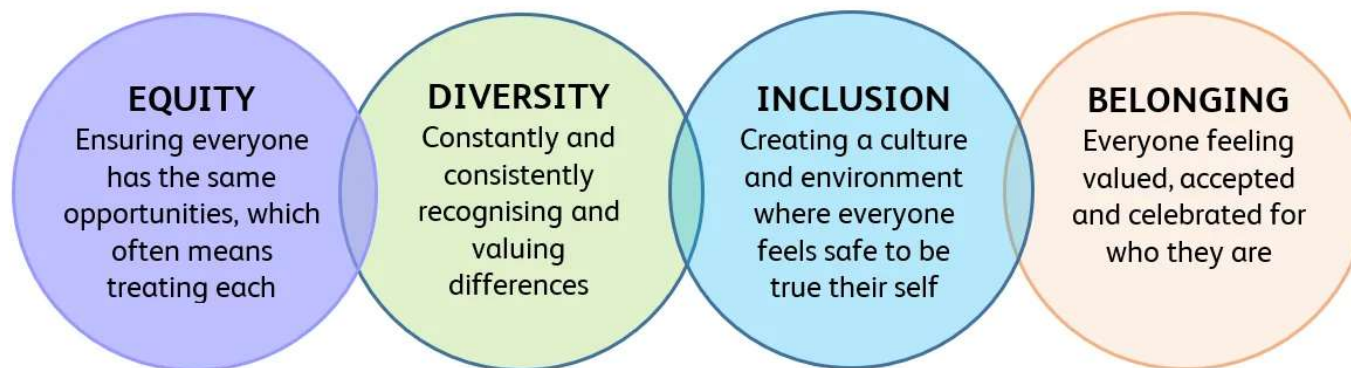


- A widening initiative designed to strengthen scientific capacity and excellence
- Connects partners across different research cultures, capabilities, and maturity levels
- Promotes equitable collaboration: shared leadership, shared learning, shared visibility
- Uses diversity of expertise, geography, and institutional profiles as an engine of innovation
- Inclusiveness embedded in project governance, training, mentoring, and decision-making
- A living example of how widening projects can create healthier, more collaborative ecosystems



Bringing Back Meaning

- Compliance keeps us aligned with the rules
- Inclusiveness reconnects us with our values and purpose
- Ethical inclusion strengthens credibility, integrity, and trust in research
- It builds a scientific environment that is human, open, collaborative and innovative





When more voices shape the process,
better science follows.

THANK YOU

