



Creating an inclusive research culture

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What do researchers need in order to succeed in research and innovation?

Works 24/7	Does not need financial security	Is a man
Is mobile	Is a leader	Is good at networking
Can lift heavy equipment	Hides any doubts	Changes topics easily
Does excellent Research, Teaching, Impact, Engagement, Service	Doesn't need to use the toilet	Can travel easily
	Can work in a laboratory environment	Is white
Attracts research funding	Has no caring responsibilities	Can think all the time
		Keeps quiet when appropriate
Passion for making a difference for our lives	Can cope with tight deadlines	Goes to conferences
	Has endless energy	
Has effective communication skills	Doesn't need to take time off	Has no dietary requirements / medication needs / adjustments
	Works independently	

Can walk up steps
 Doesn't need quiet space

Nicole Brown and Jennifer Leigh, Ableism in academia: Where are the disabled and ill academics?. Disability and Society. DOI:10.1080/09687599.2018.1455627

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From physics to engineering....

Started
MPhys

Year in
Industry

Graduation
and move to
Oxford!

Finish PhD
(become a
Doctor!)

Move to
Germany for
a Humboldt
fellowship

Start as an
engineering
lecturer!



2009

2012

2013

2017

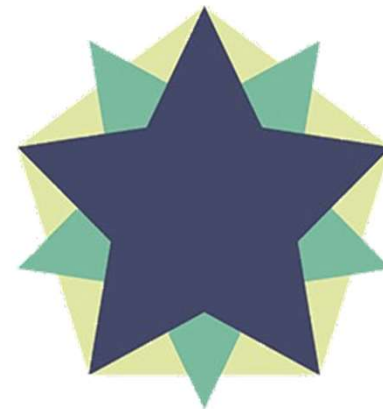
2018

But also



**deaf since
birth**

NADSN



**Co-chair of
disabled
staff network**

What is disability?

A physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on your ability to do normal daily activities.

Equality Act 2010

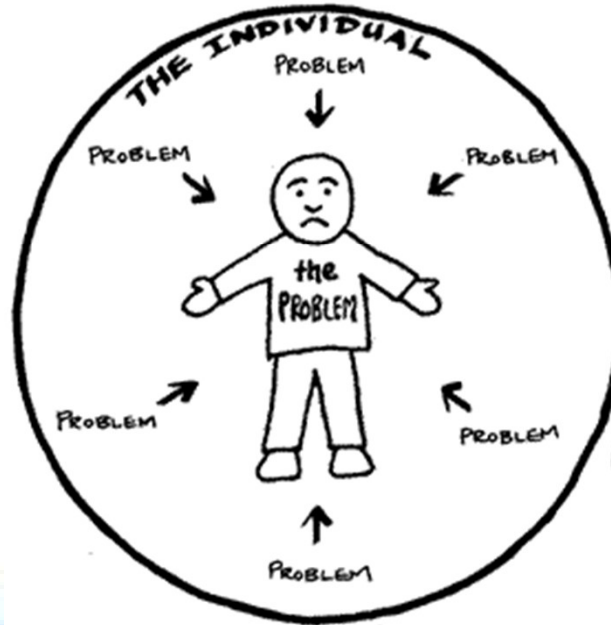
Visual, Hearing, Learning, Neurodiversity,
Physical, Emotional, Cognitive

Disabilities

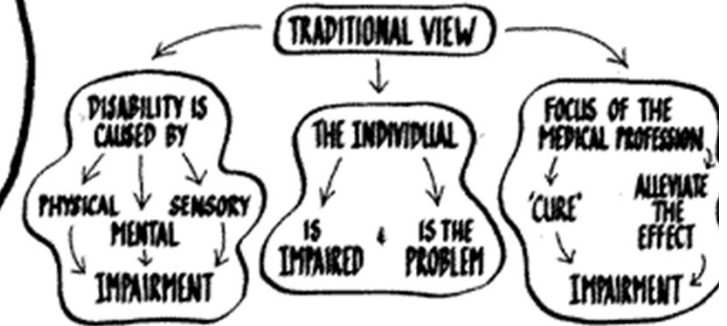


I'M A PERSON
NOT A DISABILITY

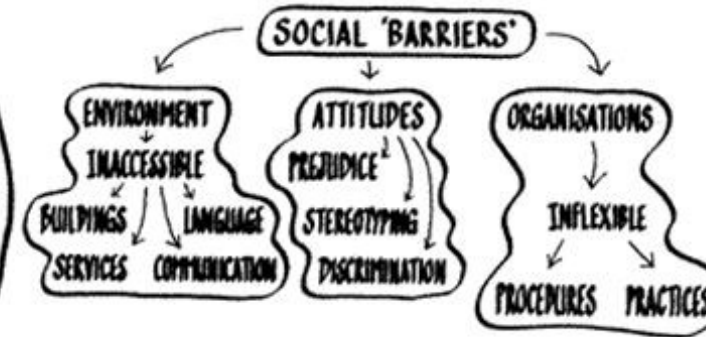
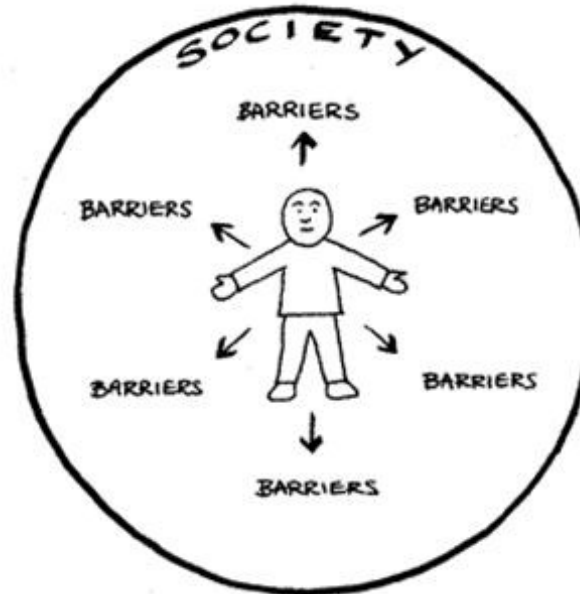
THE MEDICAL MODEL OF DISABILITY



IMPAIRMENTS AND CHRONIC ILLNESS
OFTEN POSE REAL DIFFICULTIES BUT
- THEY ARE NOT THE MAIN PROBLEMS



THE SOCIAL MODEL OF DISABILITY



What can we do to remove barriers and create a positive, inclusive research culture?

Start small! Little things can make a difference. If unsure, ask!

Some ideas for discussion....

- Mentoring and Training for all researchers raising awareness and covering how to ensure accessible teaching, conference presentations, etc.
- Start a reading club to educate on key topics (e.g. ableist language)
- Use guides for good practise for conferences, teaching, research, etc.
- Think about your lab – are there any barriers? Can a disabled researcher start now and feel included?
- Ask team members what works best for them.

What is in place already in HE?

Current Charter Marks for other minorities in HE



What about for disability?



But still nothing that is STEM-specific!

Key players and their work



**National Association
for Disabled Staff Network**



Chronically Academic

Academic Mental Health Collective

A resource for grad students and post-docs

**Academic Mental Health
Collective**



**American Astronomical Society
Accessibility/Disability**

Disability Inclusive Science Careers (DISC project)

Professor Gareth Pender
Professor Kate Sang, PhD
Intercultural Research Centre
Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh



k.sang@hw.ac.uk
Twitter: @katesang

DISC focuses on early career entry to the science sector. The aim of DISC is to improve the recruitment, retention and progression of postdoctoral disabled scientists through an online training portal designed to support employers with disability inclusion and reasonable adjustments.

Disability and academic careers

Disability in universities
Efforts continue to ensure disabled students are able to participate fully in higher education. However, similar work is not undertaken to support disabled staff.

Academic careers are...
characterised by:
long working hours,
travel and international mobility,
precarious working,
lack of gender diversity at senior levels,
Flexible and autonomous working.

This research:
Explored how disabled and chronically ill academics experience careers in UK universities
Develop suggestions for improving the working lives of disabled academics






Main findings
Being disabled is a second job: managing impairment effects, seeking adjustments to the workplace (which are difficult to secure)
Fatigue is a strong feature of academic life and may be more so for disabled academics
Disability not accommodated in recruitment and progression processes
Internalised norm that disability and academia are incompatible
Disabled academics can be powerful role models for students

Recommendations
Specific flexible funding for disabled researchers
Disability working groups within universities
Training line managers in disability issues
Need for disabled role models
More awareness of disability amongst trade unions

Data collection
Skype & telephone with 26 academics
Email responses from more than 30 academics

Being disabled is like having a second job

Disability role models could encourage more disabled students to become researchers



<https://migrantacademics.wordpress.com/2017/05/18/its-like-having-a-second-job-disability-and-academic-careers/>

Useful resources

Dr Jonathan M Levitt

University of Wolverhampton
J.M.Levitt@wlv.ac.uk



Levitt, M. (2019). Investigating barriers to disabled people becoming academics or conducting research. Nordic Network on Disability Research Conference, Copenhagen, May 2019

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#myscienceinquiry lead
Prof. Rachel Oliver,
University of Cambridge

Accessibility in STEM: Barriers facing disabled individuals in research funding processes., <https://osf.io/uzsdk/>

MANCHESTER
1824

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International Day – 3rd Dec

PurpleSpace



International
Day of
Persons with
Disabilities

3 DECEMBER



#PurpleLightUp



Kate Nash OBE
CEO of PurpleSpace

"In July 2017 I sent out a personal tweet asking what people thought about using the colour purple as one way of symbolising the experience of disability and as a means of helping employer organisations to support a #PurpleLightUp on or around the 3rd December as a way of celebrating disabled colleagues

On 3rd December 2017, to link in with International Day of Persons with Disabilities, major corporations and government buildings across the world went purple to celebrate the economic power of disabled people across the globe...

In 2018 we invite you to join us as we go #BiggerBolderBrighter..."

 /mypurplespace  @mypurplespace www.purplespace.org/purple-light-up

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Thank you for listening!

NOTHING ABOUT US
WITHOUT US.



DISABILITY
VOICES
FOR LIFE