

INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & ACCESS INTERNATIONAL KNOWLEDGE WEEK

Recap 8-11 May 2023

IDEA Center

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access

Erasmus University Rotterdam
Making Minds Matter

The Erasmus University logo, featuring the word "Erasmus" in a white, cursive script font.

Introduction

With this booklet we would like to take a look at all the important topics we talked about during our very first International Knowledge Week on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access. With photos, with reports/recaps on plenary sessions, workshops, presentations and parallel sessions.

We hope you look back on a great week as well. Hope to see you soon, let's stay connected! Please follow us on LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/company/ideacenter-eur/

Best wishes,

Prof. Semiha Denktaş
Chief Diversity Officer
IDEA Center – Erasmus University Rotterdam



Theater play Conventions & Interventions #SocialSafety

On Monday afternoon we had the informal opening of our knowledge week with four scenes by theater group Het Acteursgenootschap about social safety. This session was for knowledge week participants and for colleagues of Erasmus University Rotterdam. Our rector magnificus Prof. Annelien Bredenoord opened the afternoon with a speech to emphasize the importance of social safety. At universities, at education institutions in general, at organizations, in our society as a whole. She shared she feels it is really important to talk with staff and students about social safety and to teach them about these issues. She emphasized that this is something we invest in, in several different ways. "At our university we are committed to prevention by jointly creating a supported, inclusive culture, where it is clear what behavior we do want, and in which unwanted behavior is not tolerated".



The theater group performed scenes on micro aggressions at work, about sexual harassment, the two-way relationship between students and teachers and on how students 'land' at a university. After every scene there was conversation with the audience, moderated by Dr. Vidhi Chaudhri. It became clear at this first encounter with the participants of our knowledge week, that we had a great, open group of people who know how to respectfully address these topics and each other. Especially the scene about the people who return to university for a reunion and who are reflecting on their time spent at university, and the ways in which our route through university can differ, struck a cord. There was enough to talk about at the drinks and dinner at day 1.

Creating societal impact

On Tuesday Prof. Ed Brinksma, chairman of the board at Erasmus University Rotterdam, officially opened International Knowledge Week. He welcomed all national and international participants with a speech about the Netherlands. He shared more about our population, our colonial history, about Rotterdam - the most diverse city of the Netherlands - and about Erasmus University Rotterdam and our vision on inclusion, diversity, equity and access.

The fact that both our rector magnificus on Monday, and our chairman on Tuesday, joined our knowledge week, shows the importance they see and feel.



IDEA: concepts and EUR approach

On Tuesday Chief Diversity Officer of Erasmus University Professor Semiha Denктаş set the scene about inclusion, diversity, equity and access in an international and Dutch context. She outlined the accelerators of the past years. From Tarana Burke's Me too movement, via Covid 19 to the worldwide impact of Black Lives Matter.

Next frequently used topics such as equity, culture, gender, meritocracy and gatekeepers were explicated. Also, Semiha reflected on the apparent importance of who 'delivers the message' matters, where concepts such as intersectionality, seem to find their way in general society, when these concepts are used by people from privileged positions. The relation between stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination was explained, as well as the origin of the term Woke, and the related woke washing and wokism.



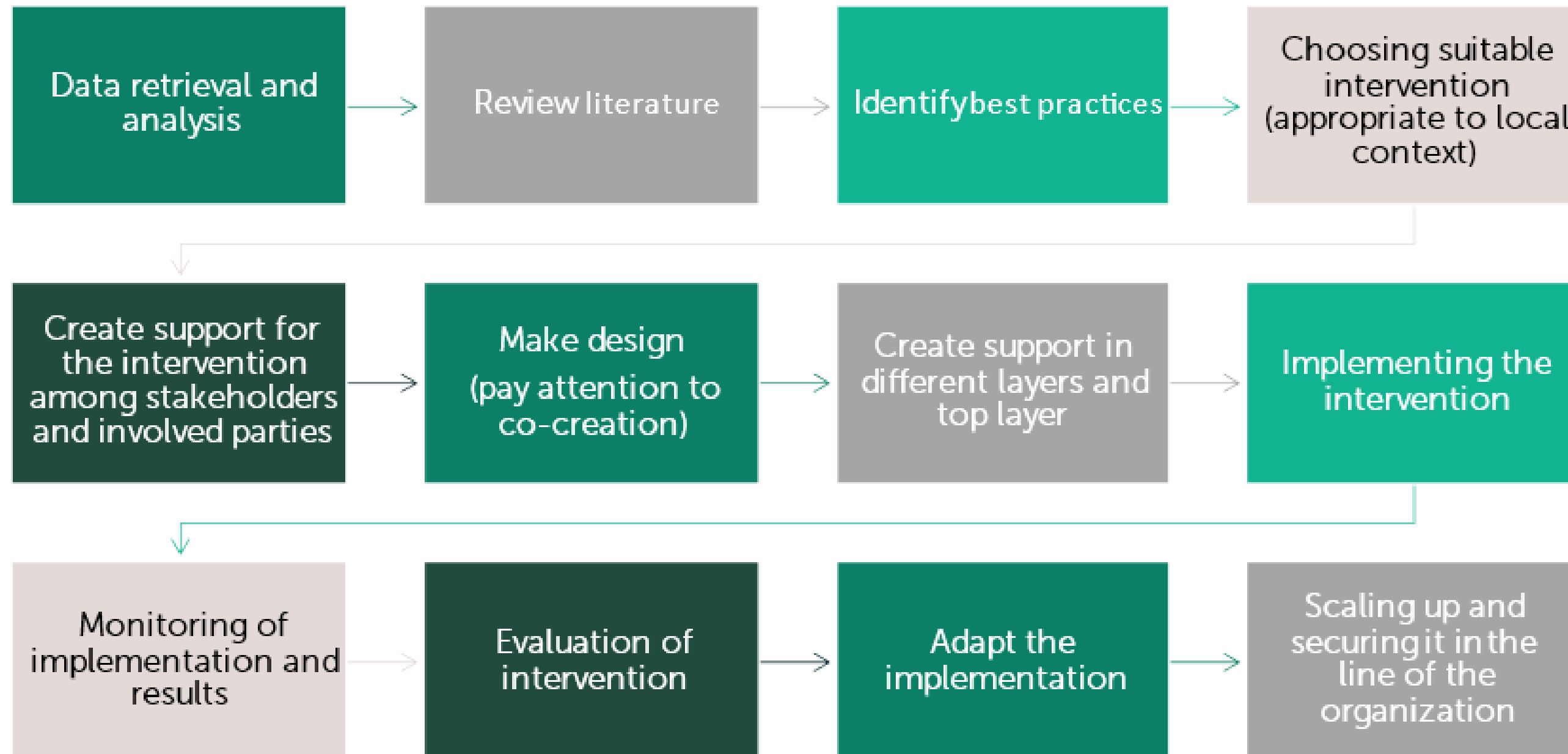
Next Semiha went on to talk about the holistic approach from EUR to IDEA. Here she talked about the importance of formulating the 'Why', why do you as an organization want to work on IDEA topics? What is your vision, what are the accompanying values, and behaviors. Twelve steps of how to set up an activity were shared.

Semiha also reflected on the integral approach of the IDEA Center, following the young talent in the city up to becoming a professor and the opportunities to work on removing barriers for equity in relevant steps along the way. The set up of the team, the customized and adaptive methods and prerequisites were discussed.



3. Define activities and order

Setting up an activity



Making an impact in the city: importance of IDEA in the approach

Prof. Eveline Crone

Do we, as a society, create optimal opportunities for all young people? Is our science approach benefitting the future of all youth? Prof. Eveline Crone, Kayla Green and Ilse van de Groep from Erasmus SYNC lab discussed their experience with connecting science and society, making societal impact, the challenges with selection bias and ensuring recognition and value for the ideas of all youth. By utilizing their knowledge on the dynamic development of the adolescent brain, collaborating with societal partners and directly involving young individuals, SYNC lab aims to understand how young people become engaged citizens in society.



Reaching out and connecting

Alfred Herrera, UCLA

On Wednesday morning Alfred Herrera, Assistant Dean for Academic Partnerships and the Director of the UCLA Center for Community College Partnerships (CCCP) talked about UCLA's longstanding support for successful transition to and retention during their first year.

In his work, Alfred focuses on helping transfer students achieve their educational goals and on developing academic enrichment programs to prepare underserved students to become competitively eligible for a research university. Alfred shared some of the success factors of the work of UCLA, such as working student centered, eliminating the Deficit Thinking Model, start early with outreaching, providing role models and always incorporating the student voice.

And this is exactly what happened next. Four students - Sameeksha Aggarwal, Mané Kirakosian, Aki Negate and Parwana Rezai - joined on stage, to share their experiences, their personal stories and insights. This really enriched the dialogue and emphasized the topics discussed.



Outreach in the UK and the Netherlands

Dr. Anne Wijtzes and Annette Hayton

Annette Hayton and Dr. Anne Wijtzes discussed the omnipresent socioeconomic and cultural inequalities in higher education access, participation, and progression. To guide the systemic planning, development, and evaluation of widening participation (outreach) efforts, we presented the theory and practice based NERUPI framework originated in the UK by Annette Hayton and Dr. Andrew Bengry (www.nerupi.co.uk). Subsequently, we shared our EUR approach to widening participation that takes shape in the Academic Outreach Programme, explaining important local contextual factors such as characteristics of the Dutch educational system, e.g., the early selection of pupils into educational tracks and important transition moment in the educational career involving (informed) choice. Together with the participants, we shared best practices on the early involvement and collaboration with important stakeholders within and outside the university and on the operation of evidence-based outreach programmes by integrating academic research from the start.



Outreach through city engagement

Rajiv Mahadew

We discussed the importance of engaging with historically underrepresented groups and connecting with local communities to achieve equity in higher education access. The Academic Outreach Programme presented a method for structuring and building the necessary networks in the city through the deployment of role models, co-creation, and active and close collaboration. Participants in this session discussed various challenges such as engaging with underrepresented communities, and together explored ways to overcome these challenges. By for instance readily participating in an outreach campus tour activity themselves.

Outreach through the school setting

Lisenne Giel

It was wonderful to connect with 17 like-minded professionals to exchange thoughts and practices surrounding outreach efforts in this session on outreach through the school setting. After a successful barbeque, we traded the Erasmus university campus for the Hugo de Groot high school in Rotterdam South, one of our partner schools. During the car ride to the location, we were able to discuss our views on widening participation efforts across different countries with differing educational policies, but similar inequalities such as the differential opportunities children from different socio-economical backgrounds have to access higher education.

During the session, we showcased the outreach programs we run with 10 elementary schools and high schools, and presented our cocreation strategies with Rotterdam youth, teachers, school administrators, parents, student-ambassadors, scientists, and freelancers. It was very impactful to exchange best practices of the way we collaborate with school communities that educate the talent of the future in a way that is sustainable for both parties, something that is not always highlighted in scientific literature on widening participation efforts. We look forward to continuing connecting with our (international) colleagues!



Perspective on education by representatives of student body - Jacqueline Onyenze

Representatives of our student body explored how and to what extent they are involved and engaged in the decision-making processes within university structures. With our students and participants, we discussed what makes effective student involvement and we examined which measures representatives of our student body find essential for student success within education institutions.

Internship discrimination - Annejet Lont (ECHO)

Together with the participants we discussed the Dutch national program against internship discrimination. The goal of the program is to normalize the conversation about internship discrimination by connecting education, the work field, and students. This connection is directed toward concrete actions that contribute to prevention, instead of just combating it. We've reflected both on the obstacles that come along while working with topics related towards discrimination in the education area, as well as sharing good practices.



Building communities amongst students - Martin Blok

Martin Blok - student counselor and confidential advisor - addressed how to engage and involve students in influencing decision-making processes at education institutions. Furthermore, he presented how to work with students to overcome exclusionary mechanisms and how to work with grassroots initiatives while also supporting change top-down.

Social embeddedness: students voices - SCEDI

The Student Council for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (SCEDI) of IDEA Center organized a workshop about social embeddedness. With the group in the session, they discussed the importance of student sounding boards. SCEDI also highlighted the work they are doing with various grassroots initiatives and how they try to amplify their voices within our university.



Inclusive Education - Dr. Yumna Asaf about the four parallel sessions

Diversity and inclusion as shared responsibility: a conversation with Prof. Rosalba Icaza

We started with discussions on some of the important dilemmas around inclusive education - the concepts psychological safety, academic freedom, freedom of speech, and safe and brave spaces. Prof. Rosalba Icaza, of the International Institute of Social Studies of EUR, discussed the importance of starting the conversation by creating a space in which everyone feels safe, but discussed how we can move to the next level of 'bravery' and 'accountability'. The session ended with a plenary exercise with everyone contributing their ideas on how they can build accountable spaces from where they are and who they are in their respective organizations.

Towards an inclusive (digital) learning environment: experiences from the e-Inclusion Project

Dr. Yumna Asaf, Project Lead of Inclusive Education in the IDEA Center, started by sharing the approach of the IDEA Center towards creating an inclusive educational system in the context of Erasmus University. The framework of inclusive education and opportunities of working within that framework in EUR were discussed. Later in the session, Dr. Marieke Sloodman, Senior Researcher from Hogeschool Inholland, shared findings of the Erasmus+ project on e-inclusion and the interventions (tools) developed through the course of the project. Marieke's interactive session provided useful tips to the participants on making online learning more inclusive.



Inclusive Education - Dr. Yumna Asaf about the four parallel sessions

Integrating Universal Design for Learning (UDL) into your course

Fanny Passeport, Education Developer, ErasmusX and Dr. Dirk Deichman, Assistant Professor, RSM, facilitated this session. Together they shared how Universal Design for Learning was integrated in a course in RSM through their project 'Design for Inclusion'. Later in the session, Andrean Lazarov, from University of Plovdiv, Bulgaria, shared how they've built a network of '2000 inclusive education ambassadors' who support the development and implementation of good practices in Bulgaria based on UDL principles for making changes in the curriculum to make it more inclusive. The session ended with a lively and interactive panel discussion and Q&A, moderated by EUR student Aki Negate.

Inclusive Education Game

Dr. Yumna Asaf, together with Dr. Katarina Putnik and Dr. Janna Michael, facilitated the Inclusive Education Dilemma Game. The game focusses on dilemmas of common classroom situations between teachers and students and allows the participants to think from the educator's perspective on what could be a possible solution for the dilemma. Through the conversations started by the game, everyone was able to exchange ideas or experiences on the dilemma situations and their possible solutions for each dilemma.



Inclusive communication

Joris van den Ring-Bax

We dove into how stories and images shape our perception of the world. Inclusive communication can be defined as a clear and respectful way of communicating that ensures that your message reaches a broad, diverse group of people; that the message is understood and heard by this group; and that this message makes people feel included. The importance of inclusive language, visuals, and content was emphasized, to ensure that messages are accessible and reach diverse audiences. It's not about being right or wrong, but rather about using inclusive words and images, about preferable ways of communicating, and about creating awareness that words and images matter.

Implicit bias was also discussed, referring to the automatic associations and reactions we have towards people based on stereotypes. Media makers and communications advisors have a significant influence on people's perceptions, and it is essential to be aware of implicit bias to create inclusive communication. There were lively discussions about (examples of) videos, images and text; it is clearly a subject that strikes a cord.



How do you ensure inclusive organizational processes? Focus on inclusive recruitment and selection of employees.

Mark Baas

We discussed a wide variety of approaches to making recruitment and selection more inclusive, and how to do so in a pragmatic manner that works well for the selection committee, too. With a great deal of input from the audience - experiences, recommendations, and more - it became a very interactive session with something to take away for everyone present. It felt wonderful to see so much engagement and genuine interest in the topic and on how to best approach it.



Talent progression: a systemic approach

Dr. Vidhi Chaudhri and Dr. Katarina Putnik

An inside look at EUR's 25/25 policy measure, an example of a measure supporting talent progression. Launched in 2019-20, round 1 of 25/25 was a university-wide initiative to advance social equity in academia. Specifically, the goal was to reach 25% of female professorship by 2025. During the session, project leaders Katarina and Vidhi walked participants through the backstory and the research supporting the measure before diving deep into the specific activities, outcomes, and learnings from round 1.

(Organisational) tools and approaches for stimulating inclusive leadership

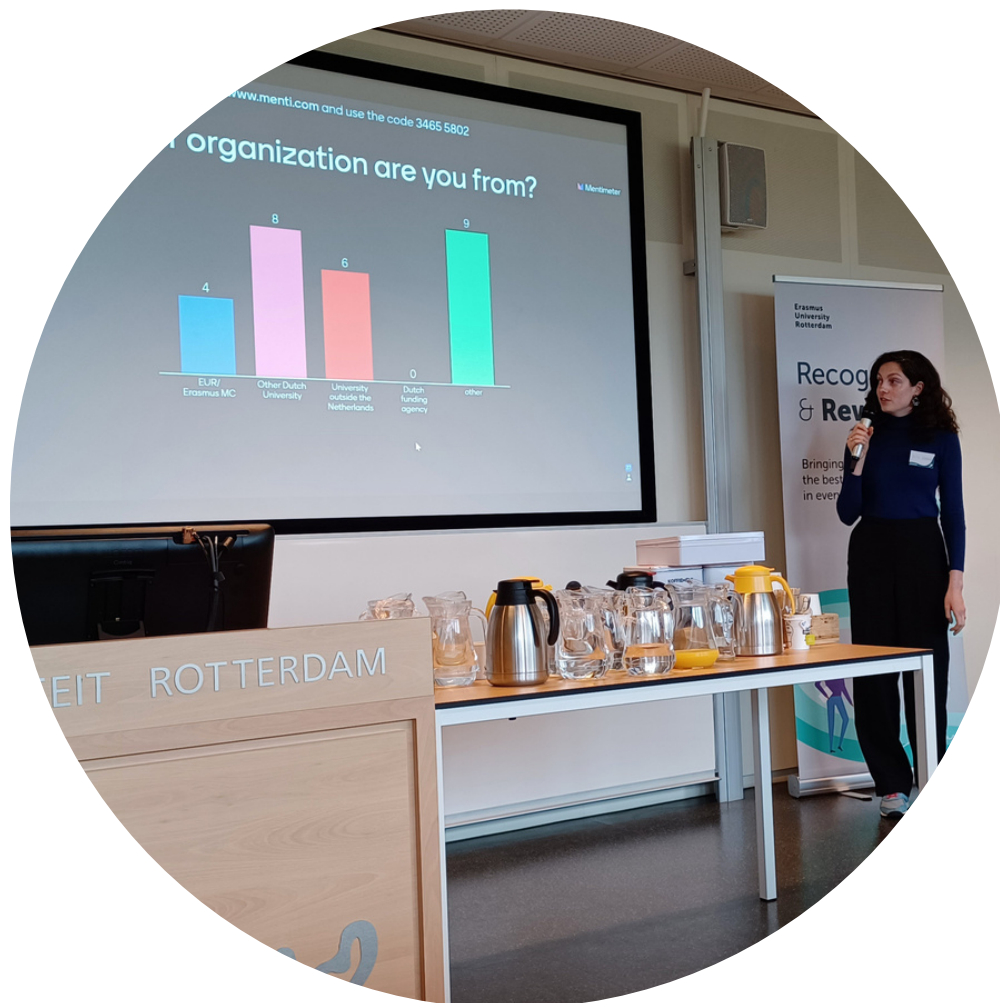
Growing towards a more inclusive organization hinges on leadership. You need leaders, at the top but also leaders of teams in other levels of the organization, who communicate how to lead inclusively. They need to set an example of desired behavior. But what exactly do you do if you are an inclusive leader? We discussed a systemic view on the topic inclusive leadership. We unpacked the common elements of an inclusive leader and shared tools on how to show empathy and operate with a curious mindset. Participants got to experience the meaning of taking a different person's perspective. Tools for deep, active listening and sharing vulnerability were shared as well. The group was one of the most attentive and constructive audience we have seen. Thanks to all the thoughtful contributions.



Recognition and rewards: challenges and opportunities for diversity and inclusion

We bridged two important developments within academia, namely the Recognition & Rewards programme (R&R) and the movements towards a more inclusive academia. Both are about diversity: in terms of backgrounds, but also in terms of talents. R&R aims to modernize the current system for appreciating, recognizing, and rewarding academic staff and thereby creating room for everyone's talents. As a result, it offers opportunities for a more diverse group of academics to flourish. At the same time, a more qualitative assessment of academic quality also leaves room for bias.

With 34 participants, we were very happy with the turnout, and with backgrounds varying from academia, the national government, consultancy and banking, a small introduction about the R&R programme was a nice place to start. A number of pain points regarding Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Access (IDEA) and R&R were touched upon, after which the programme was further interactive, with Mentimeter questions and brainstorming sessions.



Doing research on Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access: challenges, dilemmas and best practices

Dr. Helen Tibboel gave an introduction in how to do research on IDEA-related topics, and how to do research in an inclusive manner. She discussed different sources of data that can be used to gain insights for your organization (registration data, collecting quantitative and qualitative data), and the limitations of these sources. Furthermore, there was a group discussion on how we can make scientific research more diverse and inclusive, and what this means for innovation. Dr. Tibboel also discussed the benefits of having diverse and inclusive research teams and leadership. The session concluded with a brainstorm on doing intersectional research.

Diversity and data: between privacy laws and anti-discrimination policies

Dr. Aya Ezawa, Chief Diversity Officer of Leiden University, introduced a dilemma that many IDEA researchers are faced with: many institutions want to implement anti-discrimination policy, but in order to do so they need data to support their interventions. However, discussions regarding privacy often stand in the way of collecting these data. Erasmus University's Data Protection Officer, Marlon Domingus, gave an explanation regarding privacy laws, and discussed best practices concerning the collection of IDEA-related data. A group discussion on this topic was led by Dr. Helen Tibboel. One important outcome of the meeting was Marlon Domingus' idea to write a position paper about these issues. If you are interested in participating in this, please email the session organizers: A.Ezawa@hum.leidenuniv.nl, Marlon.Domingus@eur.nl, Helen.Tibboel@eur.nl



Diversity, Inclusion, and Wellbeing: a study amongst students

Fatih Acer (MA student at EUR) and Dr. Helen Tibboel discussed the Student Wellbeing Monitor, a longitudinal cohort study among students of Erasmus University. The study was an initiative by EUR's Student Wellbeing team and it started in 2020, during the COVID-19 lockdowns, as a way to learn more about how our students were faring. The IDEA Center was able to collaborate with the Student Wellbeing team and added several diversity dimensions to the survey. Preliminary results consistently show that non-binary students, students with insufficient income, students from the LGBTQIA+ community, and students with functional impairments score consistently lower on a wide range of wellbeing questionnaires. This shows how important it is to develop ways to support these students, and the value of including diversity dimensions in your research.



Social activities



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