

Terms of Reference for the EDI Task Force (Task Force within the European Society for Vascular Surgery 'ESVS')

1. Scope

1.1. The ESVS Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Task Force (TF) was created in 2024 as part of the Society's drive to address EDI concerns. The ESVS Executive Committee approved the proposal to create this Task Force, the members of which were selected through an open application process and election. The full ESVS membership was invited to apply for a position and cast their vote for candidates.

For the purpose of setting the objectives and goals of the EDI TF, the following definitions are used:

- Equality: having equal opportunities and rights, being treated fairly
- Diversity: recognising and appreciating the differences between people. Treating people's differing values, beliefs, cultures and backgrounds with respect.
- Inclusion: ensuring that people feel a sense of belonging and support regardless of their identity markers. Encouraging everyone to express themselves authentically, participate fully, and contribute meaningfully to decision-making processes.

1.2. Task Force responsibilities in regard to ESVS

The Task Force will not enter into any contracts or commitments without the agreement of the ESVS Executive Committee. Literature and artwork designed or produced in connection with the Task Force will require prior approval by the ESVS and copyright in such material will belong to the ESVS and must be identified as such. The Task Force must treat as confidential all sensitive information concerning the ESVS or its members which it acquires in consequence of or in connection with its activities.

1.3. In law, the ESVS Executive Committee is responsible for the administration of the Task Force and for all initiatives carried out in its name.

1.4. The EDI Task Force is subject to complying with [ESVS regulations](#), guidelines and SOPs, and is governed by the [ESVS Bye Laws](#).

2. Goals and objectives

2.1. Goal

To promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the ESVS, facilitate positive change within the Society representative of the community it serves. The TF's goal is to ensure a welcoming and valued environment for all individuals, regardless of their inherent identity characteristics. To achieve a state of Equity ensuring that everyone has equal access to leadership roles, opportunities for career advancement, and fair compensation for their contributions.

2.2. Objectives:

2.2.1. **Setting guiding principles and recommendations:** Establishing guiding principles and recommendations for both the structure of the Annual Meeting and for the structure of ESVS committees to better reflect equality and diversity, through formal representation on these committees.

2.2.2. **Ensuring transparency and equity of access** to opportunities across the organisation.

2.2.3. **Fostering diversity across all ESVS activities**, encompassing educational gatherings, guideline committees, and the editorial boards of journals.

2.2.4. **Assisting the ESVS in developing a strategy** to increase awareness about inequities, including tools to encourage diversity and inclusion in the ESVS.

2.2.5. **Studying/promoting the study of the state of EDI within the ESVS**, for example based on a general membership census.

- 2.2.6. **Studying/Promoting the study of the state of EDI within the European vascular field** all together.
- 2.2.7. **Studying/Promoting the study of the impact** of changes that are made, by surveying the general membership, analysing participation in the committees/Annual Meeting, determining if and what further changes are necessary.
- 2.2.8. **Seeking external consultation:** gather input and expertise from other medical societies or consultants specialised in the field of EDI to establish an effective framework for change tailored to the needs of the European Vascular Surgery Community.
- 2.2.9. **Maintain open channels** with National and International Societies affiliated to the ESVS to foster an agenda supportive of EDI throughout Europe.

2.3. Mission Statement

To promote Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the ESVS, by fostering an environment where every individual, regardless of background, identity, or perspective, feels valued, respected, and empowered within our community. This entails actively addressing systemic barriers, biases, and inequalities that may exist within the society, and implementing policies and practices that level the playing field and promote fairness and justice for all members.

By prioritising inclusion and equity, the TF aims to create a more diverse, empowered, and thriving community where every individual can reach their full potential

3. Membership

- 3.1. The EDI Task Force consists of 7 members. The initial mandate of the Task Force will run until September 2026, at which point the Task Force will review its progress and outstanding objectives and consider proposing prolonging the mandate to the ESVS Executive Committee. In the event of prolongation, the Task Force members should be invited to renew their term without re-applying (as per ESVS SOPs) and any vacant positions filled through open application and election process. The group acknowledges that an internal agreement should be reached to ensure a smooth transition and staggered changeover between outgoing and incoming members.
- 3.2. Vacant positions on the EDI TF are to be announced through the ESVS channels and will be filled through ESVS membership voting process.
- 3.3. The Lead is nominated from within the group and confirmed by consensus/majority of EDI TF's members in the event of two or more applicants being presented.
- 3.4. A member of TF will have an ex-officio seat in the Programme Committee (and be invited to all meetings) until the Task Force is reviewed.

4. Meetings

- 4.1. The EDI Task Force meets regularly (mostly online) to assess and plan activities.
- 4.2. Meeting organisation and budgeting to be aligned with the SOP on Committee Management, budget requests to be made to the ESVS Executive Committee as per agreed timelines.
- 4.3. The EDI Task Force reports its activities to the ESVS Executive Committee and Council when requested, and can itself also request to meet with them.
- 4.4. Decision making will be by consensus. If a consensus cannot be achieved, decision making will be by a majority vote of Task Force members present. In the event of a tied vote, the Lead will have the casting vote.
- 4.5. For the purposes of the EDI TF, other committee members or experts in the field can join meetings.
- 4.6. The Lead is responsible for communicating TF's decision to Executive Committee.

5. Monitoring Effectiveness

- 5.1. The EDI Task Force will undertake an annual review of its performance, to evaluate progress made.

5.2. Any issues with Task Force member performance to be dealt with as per the SOP on Committee Management.

6. Support

6.1. The EDI Task Force shall be supported administratively by the ESVS office, and ESVS Executive Committee when necessary.

7. Review

7.1. These terms of reference will be regularly reviewed as part of the process for managing the Task Force's effectiveness.

7.2. Any amendments to these terms of reference must remain aligned with ESVS Bye Laws and SOPs and should be proposed by the EDI Task Force for ESVS Executive Committee approval.