

Diversity and Inclusion Champion Role



What is a diversity and inclusion champion?

Firstly, thank you for being one of our Diversity and Inclusion Champions! We are excited about this new role in Cycling UK and the positive impact this will have on meeting our commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Simply put, this is a designated person who is an advocate for diversity and inclusion and provides a valuable resource to their local cycling community/group. Acting as a champion will also deliver wider benefits to the cycling community by creating a more inclusive, diversity and supportive environment for all.

Why is this role important in cycling?

This couldn't be a better time to be a champion for diversity and inclusion. The impact of COVID on cycling has brought many more people into the sport, attracting a more diverse range of groups, including families, people who haven't ridden for a long while or never even ridden a bicycle at all.

Never a time has there been such a spotlight on diversity. The demographic of cycling is changing all the time. We want to continue with this momentum but at the same time, we don't want to leave people behind. This is why this role is so important - from the policies we put in place to the people we engage with through our events and activities, Cycling UK wants to embed diversity and inclusion in everything it does. You will play a significant role in helping us achieve this.

Yes, there is a lack of diversity in cycling in the UK, but we must not make the assumption that these groups are hard to reach - it's the spaces that we create that should be made accessible to all. The only way we can do this is to look at how we do things and think creatively about how we can do them better. No one should feel they have to 'fit' into the space, rather we should all be embracing diversity and make cycling a welcoming space for all.

What do we mean when we talk about diversity?

When we talk about diversity, we should think about everyone. We all have different experiences, talents, skills and opinions. Diversity enriches our communities through shared experiences with different people. For example, in your cycling group, you will meet people from a diverse range of socio-economic backgrounds who may also have different personalities and varied levels of ability in cycling.

However, there are some groups who are underrepresented within cycling based on a personal characteristic such as race, gender, disability and sexual orientation. Bias and discrimination exclude people who have specific characteristics, making it difficult for them to participate at the same level as everyone else.

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We must be proactive in creating a level playing field so that cycling becomes a sport that everyone can enjoy.

Key role overview

The role of the champion is to actively promote diversity and inclusion and engage positively with others to create a cycling space that is welcoming and accessible to all.

EDUCATE CELEBRATE COLLABORATE

Below is a description of the four key principles of the role of a champion:

1. Actively encourage conversations about diversity and question the way we do things

- If there is a lack of diversity, this excludes the voices of groups who are not present.
- Engage with those who are from diverse backgrounds to find out what you could do differently.
- Encourage others in your group/club to talk about diversity and inclusion, think about where might there be barriers, but also consider if you can create opportunities to welcome more diversity into the club/group.

Ask questions about diversity and inclusion and help build this into your club's decision-making and planning at an early stage - too often diversity and inclusion is an afterthought unless someone raises it.

In practical terms this might include:

- Make diversity and inclusion a standing item on the agenda for committee meetings
- Invite speakers with different lived experiences to hear their cycling stories
- Ask questions when a decision is to be made in case it could adversely affect a particular group, for example, at what stage is 'entry level' pitched, is the cost of an event affordable to all, are the route choices for this event accessible to all etc.

2. Promote, celebrate and raise awareness of diversity and inclusion within your network/group

- Diversity can be educational and fun. The more we learn from one another, the more we can bring diversity into our everyday activities.
- Get past the 'fear of offending', open up the conversation and celebrate our differences.
- Have fun with it and learn from each other and others' lived experiences. Share inspirational stories and promote positive role models from diverse groups.

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In practical terms this might include:

- Mark a specific day to go for a ride that celebrates diversity, for example Mental Health Awareness Week, MS Awareness Day, Pride or International Women's Day.
- Promote diversity through your advertising and branding - the more you see people like yourself, the more you will want to join in.
- Write posts, blogs and newsletter that capture the lived experiences of the diversity of riders.

3. Recommend ways to improve experience of and engagement with diverse groups

- Identify which groups are underrepresented in your club.
- Collaborate with local organisations/charities to engage with the communities they represent.
- Find connections from within your club that may lead to opportunities to collaborate with partners.

In practical terms this might include:

- Organise a group specific ride or event that would encourage people from an identified underrepresented group to take part.
- Seek feedback from club members and from local partners on how the club can improve its diversity of riders.
- Communicate your commitment to diversity and inclusion - have this as a rolling theme on your social media and communication channels.

4. Be your own role model (model positive behaviours that other can aspire to)

- Live by your values and embed them into the role.
- Encourage others to model the same behaviours.
- Set a positive standard as others will look to you in your role.

In practical terms this might include:

- Attending a course on unconscious bias to help recognise it and identify how it can be removed.
- Band together with others who are also passionate about diversity by setting up a sub group, hosting an event, and/or an information sharing ride meeting.
- Take the lead and set a good example by contributing suggestions that lead to better inclusion. By starting the conversation, you will help give a voice to others.

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These principles are for you to consider and it doesn't mean you have to apply all of these at the same time. Prioritise what is important and what aspects of the role you want to focus on first. There is no pressure to try and do it all! Set priorities and what's achievable for you. You will add value by applying even one these principles.

Managing your Expectations

Here are some tips to help you manage your expectations along the way:

- You can have lots of fun with diversity and might get carried away with lots of ideas! Remember you can only do so much so set yourself some realistic goals in terms of what is achievable for you.
- Sometimes it might feel like you are the only one championing diversity and inclusion. You are not! Build your network around you and be supported by others.
- Not everyone will want to engage with diversity and inclusion in the same way as you. That's okay, find those who are interested and who want to support you in your championing role. Once you have a group of supporters, others will follow. And don't forget this is a role created by us! We want you to lead by example and encourage everyone to champion diversity and inclusion in all of our work.

Setting boundaries

In this role, it is without a doubt that some people will come and talk to you about their personal issues - for example, someone might talk to you about their mental health or someone has said something that they feel uncomfortable challenging and have come to you for advice. You are there to listen but it is not your role to provide counselling support.

It is important that you set yourself some boundaries about what you can and can't do. You can be there to listen and help signpost to the appropriate place for advice and guidance.

If someone does have a grievance or feels they have been unfairly treated, Cycling UK has a Complaints Policy. It is important that you refer the individual to the policy if they feel they have a grievance to raise.

You should feel confident to let the person know the limitations of your role - that it is an educational and awareness raising role, rather than providing one-to-one support.

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we are
cycling
The cyclists' champion **UK**

Celebrate Your Successes

Celebrate your successes. Be bold and share your stories to the wider world! If you are making a difference, sharing this will help build a voice for others to do the same.

Diversity can be fun so share your stories with us through social media, writing blogs or a newsletter or even making a film! This will give others the confidence to speak up and, once we begin to embrace diversity more, many more will want to share their stories too.

