# Specification: Project ESG

## Project Roles

* Project Mentor: TBC
* Project Lead: TBC
* Benefactor: TBC
* TPA Head of Projects: Tom Brewin

## Project purpose

The purpose of Project ESG is to encourage companies in the payments industry to adopt progressive strategies for how they impact the environment, our society and their governance in a sustainable way.

## Project Objectives

### Society and Governance

Project ESG will focus on aspects of ‘society’ and ‘governance’ that are close to home and that we can affect directly: who and how we select, recruit, manage, motivate and reward the people we employ.

In 2023 the Project sets out to achieve the community’s vision for Equity, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EEDI), which is that ‘organisations in the payments industry approach equity, equality, diversity and inclusion in a way that delivers valuable benefits to all’.

In this context, we define EEDI as follows:

* **Diversity** is the difference in race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status or background that makes each of us who we are
* **Equality** is the treatment of reward, status, rights and opportunities in an equal way irrespective of our diversity
* **Equity** is the fair treatment, access and advancement we provide to ensure we can all be the best we can be
* **Inclusion** is the practice of enabling everyone to bring their full, authentic selves to work as a place people feel they truly belong and are included

Environment

Project ESG will also focus on the ‘environment’ aspect of ESG, encouraging our members and the wider industry to adopt sustainable financial practices. It will be important to consider how our industry has moved on since The Payments Association’s ‘[Sustainability Superheroes’](https://thepaymentsassociation.org/whitepaper/sustainability-superheroes-a-how-to-guide-to-esg-for-fintechs/) whitepaper published in June 2022.

## Our approach

With the support of a Benefactor, and volunteers from our community, Project ESG will work together to deliver a twelve-month programme that explores how EEDI can be driven internally through recruitment, learning and development, events, website, Employee Value Propositions, communication and induction/onboarding. Beyond this, Project ESG will share best practice on how to better address sustainability goals with our community and the wider industry.

## The programme (H1 2023)

In 2022 the Payment Association’s Sprint Diversity generated a programme of activities that would achieve an EEDI vision for the payments industry. This programme is likely to make up the bulk of what is delivered within Project ESG within 2023, and its components are listed below.

1. **Strategy**
* Estimate timeframes, resources and funding required to deliver this programme and then:
	+ Enroll a Benefactor to lead the programme and provide funding for it in 2023
	+ Seek approval from The Payments Association’s Advisory Board and management team in January 2023
	+ Appoint a Project Mentor from The Payments Association’s Advisory Board
	+ Recruit a Project Team of volunteers from our members
* Feed this EEDI strategy into the planning processes of our member organisations so their organisational strategy and goals align with this EEDI strategy
* Evaluate the development of an EEDI scorecard to measure KPI’s and progress regarding EEDI practices, activities and implementation that can be used across the sector, or use current industry scorecards to achieve this goal of tracking progress
1. **Recruitment**
* Develop a Recruitment Toolkit / Guide so that organisations in the Payments sector and those involved in recruitment are using a consistent and inclusive approach and then:
	+ Launch the Recruitment Toolkit at a PA@TheCity event
	+ Promote the Recruitment Toolkit in our Insights Newsletter and using social media
	+ Make the Recruitment Toolkit available in the members-only section of our website
1. **Employee Value Proposition**
* Work with preferred partners to develop Employee Value Proposition-related resources that can be provided for members
* Promote this EVP to other members and encourage widespread adoption of EVPs
1. **Communication**
* Develop a communications strategy for EEDI for both internal and external audiences
* Using the skills of members of the Project Team, produce an **EEDI Charter** that can be publicly and openly promoted to encourage adoption of progressive strategies for EEDI. Feature recommendations in the Charter such as:
* Ensuring all events run by PA and members are accessible, safe and consider dietary and allergy requirements for all
* Ensuring members' websites highlight the organization’s commitment to EEDI
* Produce a **White Paper** that:
	+ Communicates the community’s vison and objectives for EEDI
	+ Explains the origins of the EEDI Charter, what it is, and what companies should do to sign up to it
	+ Promote the benefits of adopting the EEDI Charter and how it can enhance business and performance outcomes, and the moral case for diversity
	+ Features case studies of companies where EEDI has made a positive and beneficial difference to all
	+ Encourages readers to get involved in Project ESG
* Set up an **EEDI Taskforce** from the Project Team that works through the year to:
	+ Encourage members to develop an EEDI-specific webpage and social media communications (ensuring information shared is accessible)
	+ Assess existing communications and social media from members and the Payments Association and where necessary, adapt them to reflect the EEDI vision
	+ Promote our definitions of EEDI in all media and communications including the website and social media
	+ Carry out accessibility audits to determine that all member websites are accessible to a wide range of visitors
1. **Learning and Development**
* Encourage members to adopt a learning programme to support enhanced awareness of EEDI in the Payments sector
* Produce a **directory of training providers** to support purchasing of learning and development for Payments Association members
	+ Training methods can include facilitated learning, webinars, Lunch and Learns, information shared on intranet, EEDI information, resources and guidance provided on organisation intranet systems
	+ Training topics can include areas such as bias/micro behaviours/microaggressions, inclusive recruitment, inclusive language, Race inclusion, Disability inclusion, LGBT+ inclusion, Dignity at Work, Cultural awareness, Managing difficult conversations, Gender Inclusion, Inclusive leadership
	+ Opportunity for members to add their own resources to the directory for a cost
1. **Events**
* Hold EEDI specific events raising awareness of different aspects of EEDI as identified during this report such as:
	+ Podcast
	+ Webinar
* Incorporate sessions in our current event programme such as webinars, training, and conference event panels, run by TPA and other event companies or trade associations, about EEDI
* Select speakers at PA events such as PAY360 to reflect current themes, beyond gender diversity
* Proactively encourage those booking tables at PAY360 Awards, CEO Round Tables, Conference Panels, webinars and other events to invite a diverse range of guests (dropping the ladder down) - and encourage this in all communications and booking details
* Raise awareness of notable calendar dates and look to promote them via the website, social media and our events
* Convert our logo to reflect current themes, for example, make it a rainbow in Pride Month
* Convert theme of a PA@Home/PA@TheCity events to reflect current themes

The activities in the programme will be not interfere with or replicate industry initiatives already in place.

##

## Target audience

Our target audience is everyone working for an organisation in the payments industry, from board directors and owners to managers and those working on the front line. This includes:

1. Banks
2. New Fintechs
3. Established Payments firms
4. Advisors, lawyers and consultancies
5. Users such as merchants, other parts of financial services and the public sector

##

## Project Budget

Funding for Project ESG will be provided by a Benefactor. Sign-off for any project expenditure will be approved by the Project Mentor, in conjunction with the Project Lead and Head of Projects.

## Note on Project Activities

The exact deliverables and timescales will be subject to approval and sign-off from the Project Mentor and will be confirmed in the next version of the project specification. It is likely that the scope will change and a small number of high impact activities that are identified will either be at minimal or no cost will be selected, depending on identifying a Benefactor to support the project.

## Review & Reporting

Main achievements and overall project activity will be highlighted at Advisory Board meetings. If project outputs require escalation or may be perceived as being contentious in nature, these will be raised to the Advisory Board for review and guidance.

The success of the project will be reviewed on an annual basis by the TPA’s Advisory Board, who will choose whether to continue the project or close the project.

## Risks and Uncertainties

These are the risks that may arise from events that would jeopardise the project achieving its objectives. Risks may impact on time, cost, or quality of outcome. It is also important to plan what mitigating actions can be taken to lessen the risk.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Risk &Description | Likelihood(1-5) 1 | Impact(1-5) 2 | Initial Mitigating Actions |
| Failure to meaningfully engage with stakeholders | 2 | 5 | Map project team’s individual and collective network of relevant stakeholders, and utilise multiple parties to engage with stakeholdersUpon initial engagement, encourage said stakeholders to review project outputs of interest and call for regular engagement meetings (whetherquarterly or bi-annually) |
| Failure to secure funding for outputs with associated costs | 3 | 4 | Reduce areas of cost where possible. From a content perspective, the project will utilise project team expertise and insight as a primary source of content for potential outputs (i.e open letters, blog content). |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | Cost-associated outputs will not be commissioned unless a minimum viable threshold for revenue has been achieved. Sponsorship revenue will be driven from the TPA sales team and, if necessary, relevantAmbassadors (paid on a commission-only basis). |
| Reputational damage incurred by contentious or heavily political content | 3 | 4 | Content of a potentially sensitive or contentious nature will be escalated to the Advisory Board for review. If said content will cause significant reputational damage, it will not be publicised.Content that is of a potentially sensitive or contentious will not be attributed to specific TPA members to avoid any risk-by-association for TPA members.TPA will work with external PR agency, SkyParlour, to curate a position or statement that can be used as a reactive piece. |
| Scope creep | 3 | 2 | Review present specification prior to first launch meeting to ensure that specification is achievableAvoid broad themes/initiativesIdentify high-impact and achievable outputs for the project |

Key:

* Likelihood 1: Score 1 = Rare and 5 = Almost Certain
* Impact on time 2: Cost and quality of project deliverables: 1 = Insignificant and 5 = Catastrophic