

ALLYSHIP

**Equal opportunities workshop
Young Scientists Meeting 2026 of the CRC TRR 257
RWTH Aachen University, 23-24 September 2026**

**Lena Fritsche &
Helga Moser**

Overview

Part 1: Understanding and reflecting

- Identity & Dimensions of Diversity
- Discrimination
- Allyship
- Microaggressions & Interventions

Part 2: Acting (Theatre for Living)

- Gaining different perspectives & insights
- Trying out strategies....

Identity & Dimensions of Diversity

Exercise: Portraits

- Reflecting on prejudices, mistake-friendly environment

NAME: _____

Languages you speak..

*You live in
with...*

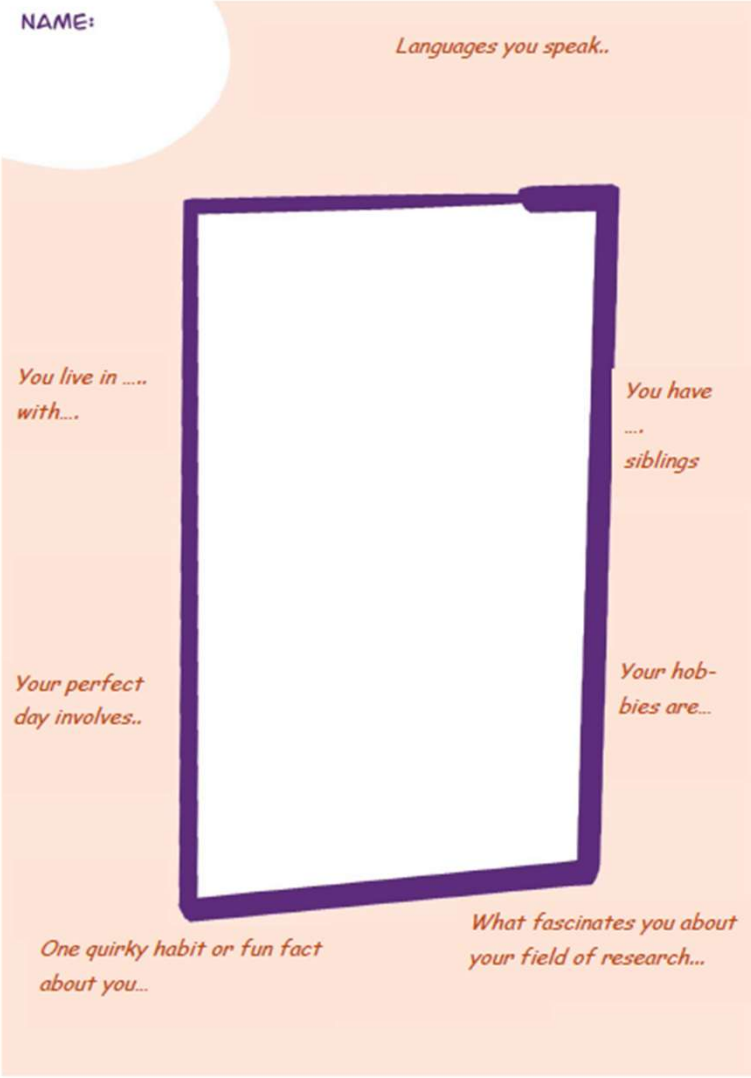
*You have
.....
siblings*

*Your perfect
day involves..*

*Your hob-
bies are...*

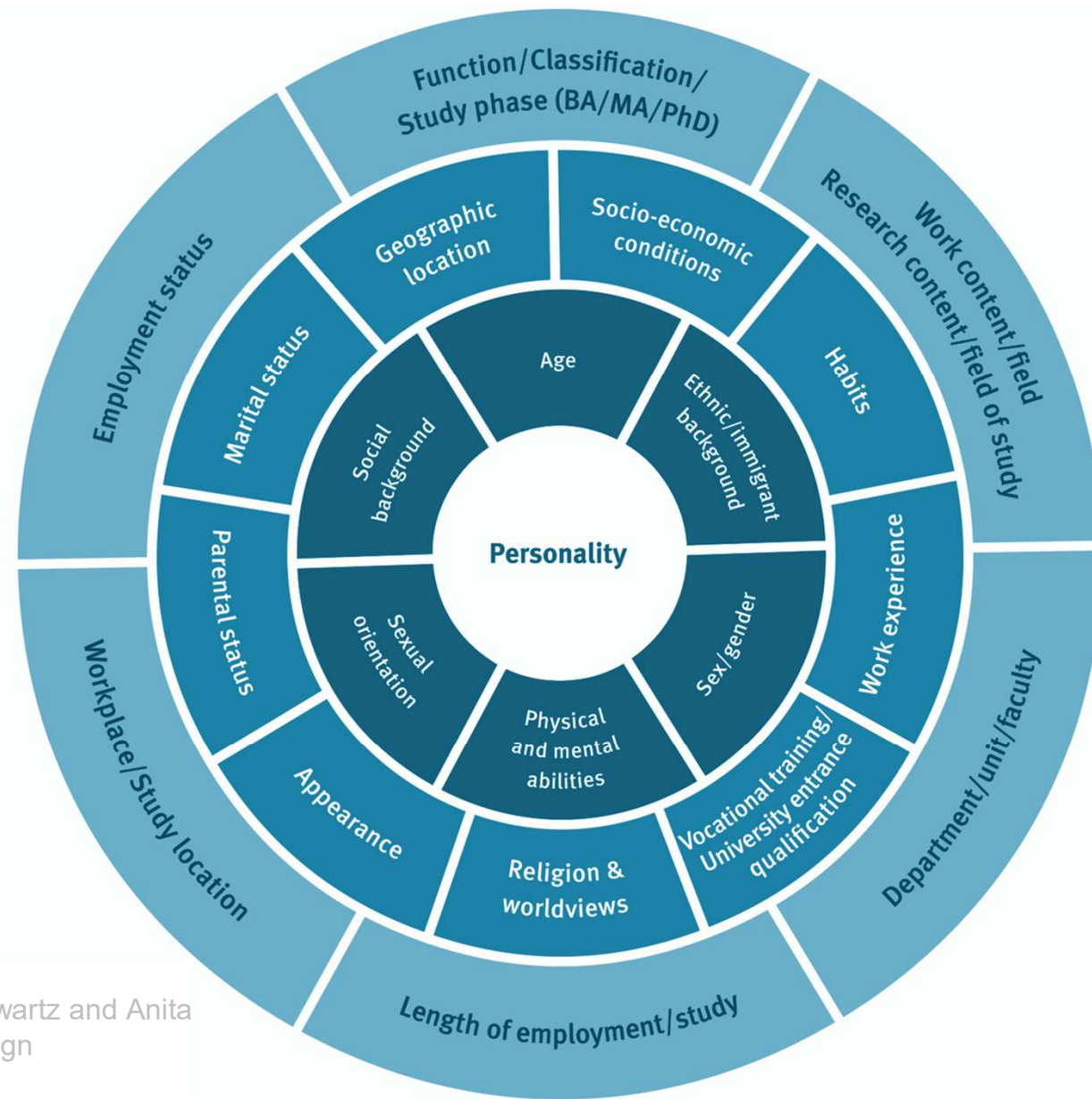
*One quirky habit or fun fact
about you...*

*What fascinates you about
your field of research...*

The form is a light orange rectangle with a white semi-circular cutout at the top left. In the center is a large white rectangle with a thick purple border. Surrounding this central box are eight text prompts in a cursive font, each with a specific placement: 'NAME:' at the top left, 'Languages you speak..' at the top right, 'You live in with...' on the middle left, 'You have siblings' on the middle right, 'Your perfect day involves..' on the bottom left, 'Your hobbies are...' on the bottom right, 'One quirky habit or fun fact about you...' at the bottom left corner, and 'What fascinates you about your field of research...' at the bottom right corner.

Dimensions of Diversity

- Organisational dimensions
- External dimensions
- Core dimension



University of Munster's Diversity Wheel according to Lee Gardenswartz and Anita Rowe 4 Layers of Diversity"; © Uni MS - Stabsstelle Web und Design

Discrimination

Discrimination

General definition:

Unequal treatment of people based on certain characteristics.

→ Meaning is attributed to these characteristics without objective justification.

Different legal, political, and academic definitions of discrimination

Specific forms of discrimination

- Ableism
 - Adultism
 - Ageism
 - Anti-Semitism
 - Anti-Romani racism
 - Classism
 - Homophobia
 - Lookism
 - Racism
 - Sexism
- +
- Islamophobia
 - Linguicism
 - Transphobia
 - etc.

Intersectionality

= the recognition that social identities or categorizations (such as race, class, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity etc.) create overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

⇒ oppression cannot be reduced to only one part of an identity; each oppression is dependent on and shapes the other.

⇒ the effects of discrimination and disadvantage are more acute for those who belong to multiple marginalized groups, as the inequities they experience reinforce each other.

University of British Columbia (Office of Respectful Environments, Equity, Diversity & Inclusion)

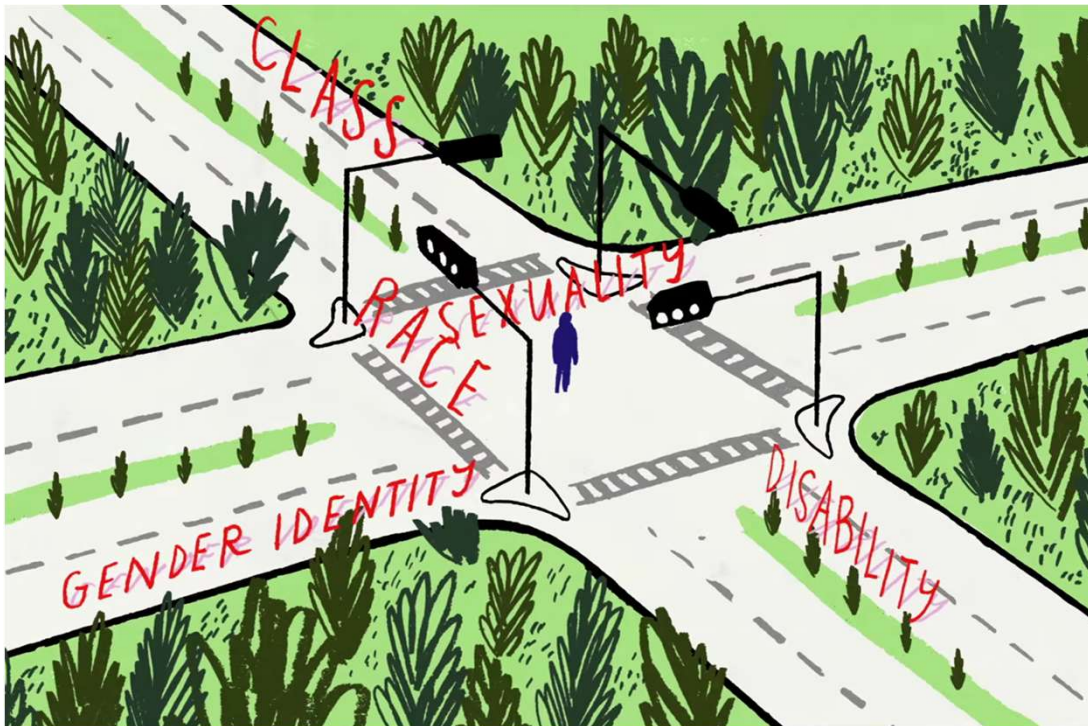


<https://ethics.org.au/big-thinker-kimberle-crenshaw/>

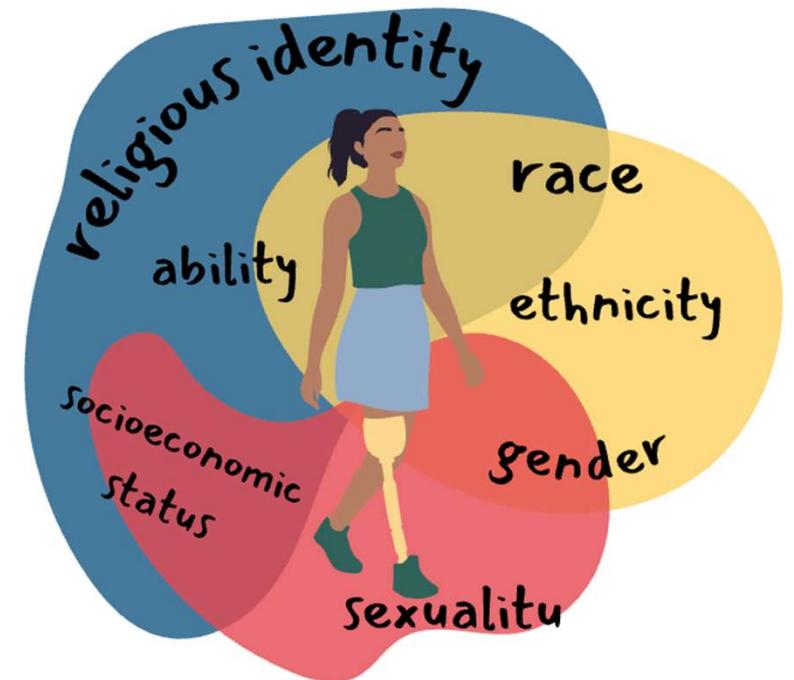
Kimberlé
Crenshaw

- lawyer, civil rights advocate, critical race theory scholar

Intersectionality



Screenshot taken from NMAAHC (29.08.2017): #APeoplesJourney:
African American Women and the Struggle for Equality from
https://belonging.hypotheses.org/4469#footnote_4_4469



<https://soundwriting.pugetsound.edu/universal/intersectionality.html>

Levels of discrimination

In social sciences, a distinction is made between

- individual and interactional
- institutional and
- structural discrimination

Legal Perspective in Germany

Discrimination under the **General Equal Treatment Act (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz AGG)**

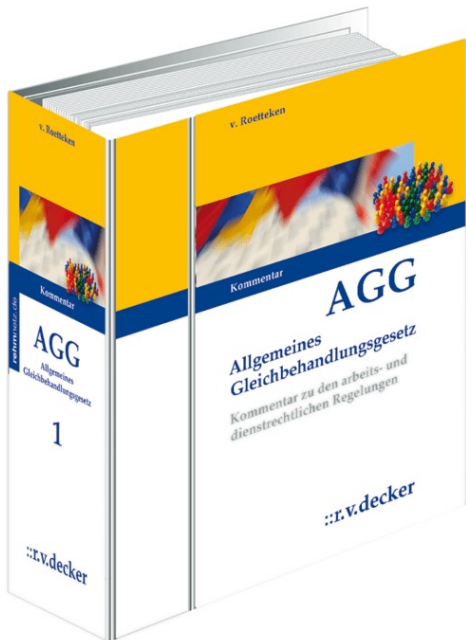
In order to invoke the General Equal Treatment Act in cases of discrimination, the following three factors must be met:

“Discrimination is

- (1) the **disadvantageous treatment** of individuals
- (2) based on a **protected characteristic**
- (3) **without objective justification.**”

1. **race or ethnic origin**
2. **gender**
3. **religion or belief**
4. **disability**
5. **age**
6. **sexual identity**

Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes /
Federal Anti-Discrimination Agency 2015, p. 9



Allyship

Exercise:

Anatomy of an ally

What does allyship mean to you? We would like to start with a more physical approach.

Draw an outline of a body and show the “anatomy of an ally.”

- What qualities, actions, and attitudes make someone an ally?
- Use the body as a metaphor—for example, eyes that identify privilege and notice injustice, a heart that empathises ..., etc.
- Make it a self-explanatory drawing.

Defining Allyship: more a practice than an identity

- *a custom*
 - (a) comprised of **several actions** rather than one action alone taken by **advantaged group individuals**,
 - (b) which are **motivated by egalitarian goals to support outgroups that are disadvantaged**
 - (c) **recognized** as supportive by those they seek to support.

(De Souza L, Schmader T. 2025 p.6)

⇒ **Allyship** (support where there is unequal status)

vs. **Solidarity** (support where there equal status)

(cf. Burson & Godfrey, 2020; Craig et al., 2020)

Features of Allyship Actions

Time



When does the action occur in relation to proximal bias?

Aim



What is the proximal goal of the action?

Focus



Who or what is the proximal focus of the action?

Reactive
Allyship Actions



more contingent on proximal bias (a specific event occurring)

counteract/decrease existing bias

people or policies that perpetrate bias

Proactive
Allyship Actions



less contingent on proximal bias (a specific event occurring)

increase feelings/experiences of or capacity for inclusion and respect

people or groups that will benefit from the action

Typology of Allyship Actions

Intrapersonal

Interpersonal

Institutional

Reactive

Behaviors that address bias, prejudice, discrimination, etc.

- More contingent on proximal bias (specific event)
- Aims to counteract/decrease existing bias
- Focuses on perpetrators

Including but not limited to...



Bias Control
Addressing *oneself*
as perpetrator



Confrontation
Addressing *other individuals*
as perpetrators



Supporting Collective Action
Addressing *institutions*
as perpetrators

Proactive

Behaviors that engender inclusion, respect, etc.

- Less contingent on proximal bias (specific event)
- Aims to increase feelings/experiences of or capacity for inclusion and respect
- Focuses on those that will benefit from the action

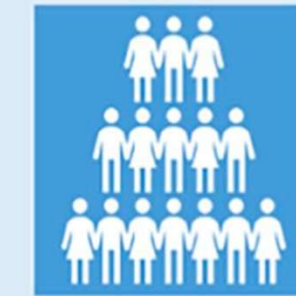
Including but not limited to...



Seeking Positive Contact
Increasing *own* capacity
for inclusion/respect



Cross-Group Relationships
Increasing *other individuals'*
feelings of inclusion/respect



Inclusive Leadership
Increasing *institutional* capacity
for inclusion/respect

Microaggressions & Interventions

Discrimination and Microaggressions

Discrimination

- Unequal treatment or disadvantage based on characteristics.

Microaggressions / exclusionary behaviors

- Everyday comments, questions, behaviours, or interactions
- that communicate stereotypes, exclusion, or derogatory messages
 - often unintentionally
 - can be subtle, but their cumulative impact can be significant
 - happen at a much higher frequency to women, people of color, those in the LGBTQ+ community, and those with disabilities.



A MICROAGGRESSION IS

Subtitles/closed captions ©

Fusion Comedy, How microaggressions are like mosquito bites

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hDd3bzA7450>

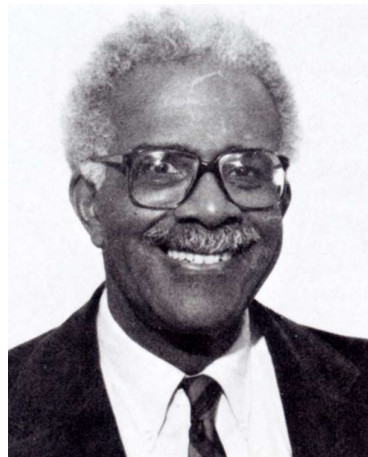
Microaggressions

Background: development of the concept

1960s

Chester Middlebrook Pierce

1927–2016, Professor of psychiatry and education at Harvard University



<https://www.apaf.org/library-archives/galleries/voices-of-progress-a-historical-journey-of-black-psychiatrists-in-the-apa/chester-m-pierce-m-d-e946d64a217a78cda1353acce1c1cb60/>

2000s

Derald Wing Sue

Professor of Psychology and Education at Columbia University



https://www.tc.columbia.edu/faculty/dw2020/faculty-profile/cardoni_Derald-Wing-Sue_092519_0068-2.jpg

Microaggressions

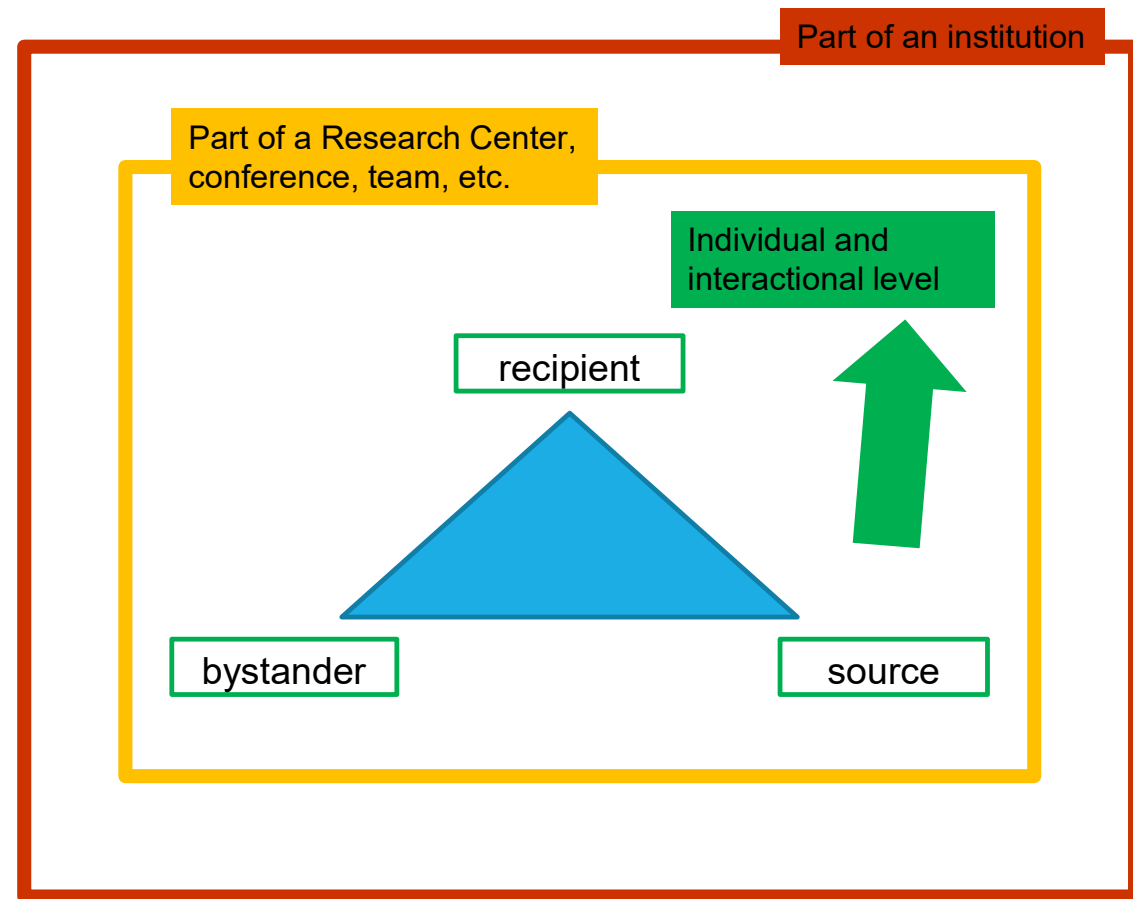
Which parties are involved in microaggressions?

Triangular model:

- recipient
- source (perpetrator)
- bystander

Ackerman-Barger / Jacobs 2020 (as cited in Fatfouta 2025)

+ further levels



Team and institutional level

In your concrete context, e.g. Research Centres, conferences, teams:

- **Example Collaborative Research Center TRR 257**
 - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion/EDI team → code of conduct
 - Organisers of meetings → code of conduct

Young Scientists Meeting 2026 of the CRC TRR 257

Sep 21 – 24, 2026
Europe/Berlin timezone

Overview

Timetable

Registration

Call for Abstracts

Contribution List

Participant List

Information for Participants

Tour of the old town of Aachen

Code of conduct

Equal opportunity workshops

Contact

Code of conduct

The organisers are committed to making this meeting productive and enjoyable for everyone, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, nationality or religion. We will not tolerate harassment of participants in any form.

Please follow these guidelines:

- Behave professionally. Harassment and sexist, racist, or exclusionary comments or jokes are not appropriate. Harassment includes sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, sexual attention or innuendo, deliberate intimidation, stalking, and photography or recording of an individual without consent. It also includes offensive comments related to gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race or religion.
- All communication should be appropriate for a professional audience including people of many different backgrounds. Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate.
- Be respectful to others. Do not insult or put down other attendees.

Participants asked to stop any inappropriate behaviour are expected to comply immediately. Attendees violating these rules may be asked to leave the event at the sole discretion of the organisers without a refund of any charge.

Any participant who wishes to report a violation of this policy is asked to speak, in confidence, to one of the organisers.

This code of conduct is based on the "London Code of Conduct", as originally designed for the conference "Accurate Astrophysics. Correct Cosmology", held in London in July 2015. The London Code of Conduct was adapted with permission by Andrew Pontzen and Hiranya Peiris from a document by Software Carpentry (<http://software-carpentry.org/conduct.html>), which itself derives from original Creative Commons documents by PyCon and Geek Feminism. It is released under a CC-Zero licence for reuse.

<https://indico.kit.edu/event/5442/page/1409-code-of-conduct>

Collaborative Research Center TRR 257 > Equal Opportunities > Code of Conduct

Equal Opportunities

We are committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and supportive research environment within our Collaborative Research Center P3H. The EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) team works to ensure that all members—regardless of background, gender, or personal circumstances—can thrive and reach their full potential. In particular, we

- provide information, advice, and initiatives on topics such as career development, mentoring, work–life balance, and equal opportunities
- offer confidential support in cases of discrimination, harassment, or conflict
- actively contribute to shaping fair and transparent structures within the CRC P3H through [training and awareness workshops](#) and a [Journal Club](#) to discuss scientific literature on equal opportunities issues.

On this page, you will find resources, programs, and contact points designed to support you throughout your time in the CRC P3H.

Contact us! We encourage you to directly get in touch with the [EDI team](#) with any suggestions, comments or concerns.

We would like to kindly draw your attention to the [Code of Conduct](#), applying to all members and visitors of the CRC P3H.

Further information on equal opportunities at the participating universities can be found [here](#).



Code of Conduct



EDI Events



Contact us

<https://p3h.particle.kit.edu/equalopportunities/start>

Team and institutional level

In your concrete context, e.g. Research Centres, conferences, teams:

- **Example Collaborative Research Center TRR 257**
 - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion/EDI team → code of conduct
 - Organisers of meetings → code of conduct

At your institution, e.g. at KIT

- **Anti-Discrimination Office**
<https://www.kmb.kit.edu/english/459.php>
- **Central Officers, Contact Persons and Ombudspersons**
<https://www.kiss.kit.edu/730.php>
- **Conflict Management and Psychosocial Counseling (KMB)**
<https://www.kmb.kit.edu/english/index.php>

In your town: Aachen, Karlsruhe, Heidelberg, Siegen

- **e.g Antidiskriminierungsstelle Karlsruhe**
<https://www.antidiskriminierung-ka.de/en>



Code of Conduct of Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) (Code of Conduct)

In any case of doubt or conflict the German Version always prevails and is legally binding

Based on a broad participation of the KIT divisions, institutes, service units, staff units, equal opportunities commissioners and staff council, the Presidential Committee in its meeting of August 22, 2016 and the KIT Senate in its meeting of September 19, 2016 have agreed on the following Code of Conduct.

Preamble

Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) as "The University in the Helmholtz Association" wants to contribute to solving major societal, economic and environmental challenges through research, teaching and innovation in a highly diverse work environment.

For KIT, this objective involves a particular social responsibility which does not only consist in the observance of legal regulations and the safeguarding of scientific probity but also includes particular ethical requirements as regards the behavior of the members and employees e.g., respectful and cooperative dealings with colleagues, personal integrity, the rejection of corruption, respect for ecological issues and zero tolerance of any kind of discrimination.

These legal and ethical requirements on KIT and its members and employees are covered by the present Code of Conduct providing a binding orientation framework. In addition, the Code of Conduct is a self-commitment towards third parties and applies accordingly to the dealings with business partners of KIT.

This Code of Conduct reflects the central priority of ethical and legally compliant behavior at KIT.

→ 2.2 Non-discriminatory Studying and Working Environments

KIT – The University in the Helmholtz Association

www.kit.edu

https://www.comp.kit.edu/downloads/Code%20of%20Conduct_KIT_external_use.pdf

Microaggressions

What can the involved parties do?

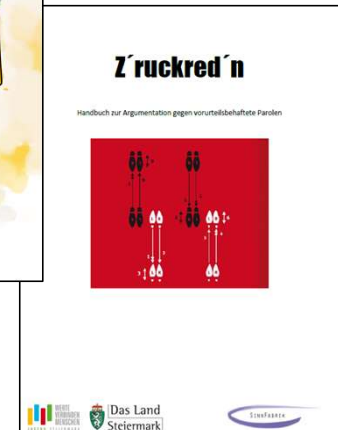
Individual and
interactional level

Recipient: ACTION	• Ask clarifying questions • Come from curiosity, not judgment • Tell what you observed in a factual manner • Impact exploration • Own your own thoughts and feelings • Next steps
Source: ASSIST	• Acknowledge your bias • Seek feedback and information • Say you are sorry • Impact, not Intent • Say Thank You
Bystander: ARISE	• Awareness of microaggression • Respond with empathy • Inquiry of facts • Statements that start with “I” • Educate and Engage

Ackerman-Barger (n.d.)

Key elements in dealing with discriminatory statements / microaggressions

- Goals
- Attitude
- Strategies



Goals

- Knowing your (own) goals and being able to choose from among them
- thereby: responding to different contexts
- adapting to how you're feeling that day
- Choosing a realistic and achievable goal → avoiding personal frustration

Attitudes

Recommended mindset:

- Show interest in the other person
- Be curious about the background and open to learning
- Avoid falling into an “us versus them” discourse
- Don’t argue from a defensive position

Schindlauer/Bischof 2010, S. 8-9

Strategies

How do I respond to microaggressions?

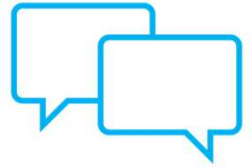


Fatfoua 2026, p. 28-34

4 possible strategies for microinterventions

	➤ Goals	Core idea
Make it visible	➤ making it clear to the other person, in a friendly but firm manner, that something has happened that bothers you.	If no one addresses the microaggression, it remains invisible and becomes normalized.
Interrupt and redirect	➤ to directly stop or weaken the hurtful statement or gesture. ➤ an immediate interruption or redirection to limit the damage.	A short, clear rebuke can be more effective than simply ignoring the microaggression.
Raise awareness	➤ it is about initiating learning processes and building bridges. ➤ to promote reflection and insight in perpetrators, even if a single conversation rarely brings about immediate change.	Not to expose, but to raise awareness.
Mobilise support	➤ not every situation can be handled alone. ➤ targeted activation of external resources, from trusted individuals and trained professionals to one's own team and relevant support services. ➤ It is important not to interpret this strategy as a sign of weakness.	Represents a form of resistance and can take place at various levels: individual, communal, or institutional.

Exercise: Exploring and Practising Interventions



1. Getting started

Option 1: Use the **prepared cards** with examples of microaggressions. **Option 2:** Write your **own example** on a blank card.

Our suggestion: Start with Option 1 and work with the provided examples. In the following rounds, use your own examples.

2. Draw a card: One person draws a card and reads the statement shown on the front aloud.

Recommendation: Don't look at the back of the card yet. First, try to respond to the situation yourselves.

3. Assign the roles

- **Source / Person making the statement** – expresses the microaggression.
- **Recipient / Person affected** – receives the statement.
- **Bystander / Observer** – witnesses the situation. (1-2 persons, depending on the group size)

4. Play out the scenario

Briefly act out the situation (1-2 min.)

5. Reflect on the experience

6. Discuss as a group

- Explore the suggested intervention strategies on the back of the card.

Time limit:

5 minutes per card – so everyone gets a chance to take on each role.

Microinterventions

How do I respond to microaggressions?



Fatfouta 2026, p. 36

Strategic Goal	When to Use	Goal / Impact	Example
Make it visible	In cases of ambiguity or uncertainty about whether others have also perceived the microaggression.	Clarify whether it was a micro-aggression; draw attention to the incident.	<i>What did you just mean by that?</i> <i>I noticed that...</i>
Interrupt and redirect	In cases of clearly derogatory comments, „jokes“, or clearly discriminatory behavior.	Stop the situation immediately, set boundaries, redirect the conversation.	<i>Stop, we don't talk like that here, shake your head, leave the room.</i>
Raise awareness	In supportive relationships or safe spaces where reflection is possible.	Facilitate learning, emphasize effect rather than intention, promote empathy.	<i>I know you didn't mean to hurt, but it seems that way to me....</i>
Mobilise support	In cases of power imbalance, repeated incidents, or high stress.	Secure protection, encouragement, and institutional help.	Document the incident, involve the HR department or works council, use a buddy system or peer group.

Tomorrow: Theatre of the Oppressed/ Theatre for Living

- creation of images and scenes to help us understand and analyze allyship
- games and exercises of Theatre for Living to explore moments of inner struggle related to the topic from your own lives
- **no theatre experience necessary**



<https://dailybruin.com/2015/08/10/theatre-of-the-oppressed-program-engages-students-in-dialogue>

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*You want to reach out
or have feedback?*

CONTACTS

Bibliography

Bibliography

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<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/10888683241232732> (2026-09-23)
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Further Sources

Further reading

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THREE Things Not To Say

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p05q8ght/clips>

Home Clips

Clips



Things Not to Say to FGM survivors and campaigners
DURATION: 06:18



Things Not to Say to black women
DURATION: 06:16



Things Not to Say to people who don't have sex
DURATION: 06:26



Things Not to Say to stay-at-home dads
DURATION: 06:15



Things Not to Say to people who've been in care
DURATION: 06:35



Things Not to Say to people with dwarfism
DURATION: 06:28



Things Not to Say to homeless people
DURATION: 06:40



Things Not to Say to someone with an eating disorder
DURATION: 06:27



Things Not to Say to Eastern Europeans
DURATION: 05:40



Things Not to Say to international footballers
DURATION: 05:50



Things Not to Say to people in the armed forces
DURATION: 05:22



Things Not to Say to amputees
DURATION: 06:53