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Kier - Disclosure of diversity characteristics: Feasibility study report



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KIER BIT

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About this report

Youth Futures Foundation is the national What Works Centre for youth employment, with a specific focus on marginalised young people. It commissioned the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT), a global research and innovation consultancy, to undertake a project in support of its ambition to help employers create fairer and more inclusive workplaces for young people. This project forms part of Youth Futures Foundation's What Works for Recruitment and Retention programme, which works with a small group of employers and organisations to test promising interventions aimed at improving outcomes for young people and to build a strong evidence base for effective and equitable practice.

Employees are increasingly asked to share information about their diversity characteristics - such as disability status, gender identity, neurodivergence, sexual orientation and social mobility - to help employers understand workforce representation and outcomes. Reliable diversity data enables employers to identify where disparities exist, assess whether policies are having their intended effect, and design organisational changes that better support employees, including those at earlier stages of their careers. However, where disclosure rates are low or uneven across characteristics, employers have limited visibility of who may be underserved or facing barriers, making it harder to target improvements and monitor progress for young people and the wider workforce.

In this project, titled 'Diversity Characteristics Disclosure', BIT is working with Kier Group plc ('Kier'), a major UK infrastructure services and construction business and one of the What Works for Recruitment and Retention employer partners to assess whether introducing employee communication campaigns can improve levels of disclosure of diversity characteristics.

This report presents the findings from an extended feasibility study, building on an initial study that concluded a randomised controlled trial (RCT) of employee communications was feasible in principle. Following the loss of access to Kier's internal HR system, the proposed trial had to be redesigned. The extended study therefore assessed whether a revised RCT could be delivered at Kier, and, if so, how it should be designed.

Like the initial feasibility study, the extended feasibility work had four main aims:

1. to specify the interventions in detail and articulate how they are expected to work through a theory of change;

2. to recommend an evaluation design, covering an impact evaluation, implementation and process evaluation, and economic evaluation;
3. to identify the data, operational, and governance requirements for running a robust trial, along with any remaining risks or uncertainties; and
4. to draw out lessons that can inform future Youth Futures-funded projects with employers.

This report, and the underlying extended feasibility study work, was led by BIT, with Dr Jelka Stojanov (Project Manager) and Hannah Chappell (Lead Researcher) overseeing day-to-day delivery. Strategic oversight and quality assurance were provided by Shoshana Davidson, Dr Laure Bokobza and Nilufer Rahim. The wider project team included Miller Piggott, who provided essential delivery and research support throughout.

This extended feasibility study report was first submitted to Youth Futures Foundation and Kier for review on 13 July 2026, with initial comments received on 23 July 2026. It then underwent a further round of revisions and was finalised and approved on 29 July 2026.

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Finally, we would like to thank Youth Futures for funding this work and for their close collaboration on the intervention and evaluation design. We are particularly grateful to Dan Muir, Katy Neep, Kate Macleod and Jonah Champaud for their thoughtful contributions and their careful review of our outputs.

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Executive summary

Youth Futures Foundation has partnered with Kier Group plc ('Kier'), a major UK infrastructure services and construction business, to examine the impact of communication campaigns on Kier employees' disclosure of diversity characteristics such as ethnicity, disability status, neurodiversity, gender identity, transgender status, sexual orientation, social mobility, and other personal characteristics. Reliable diversity characteristic data are essential for organisations to uncover structural barriers, monitor inclusion efforts and target workforce policies effectively. Research in workforce equality and inclusion highlights that sparse data can obscure disparities and make it harder to target support or demonstrate compliance with reporting expectations. By testing approaches to increase disclosure, this project contributes to a broader understanding of how organisations can both strengthen data quality and create conditions that support fairer outcomes for employees. The primary focus is on young employees aged 16-24, reflecting YFF's core mission to improve outcomes for young people. Employees aged 25+ are included as a secondary cohort.

An initial feasibility study was concluded, proposing a three-arm trial using Kier's HR platform. However, subsequent shifts to operational constraints made that design undeliverable. This extended feasibility study establishes a redesigned, fully deliverable trial and evaluation framework: a two-arm randomised controlled trial (RCT) comparing a standard workplace communication campaign against a behaviourally-enhanced version. Furthermore, data collection has been moved to a dedicated Microsoft (MS) Form to bypass Kier's HR system limitations and ensure maximum reach. Running power calculations against updated workforce data confirms the evaluation should be powered to yield robust, actionable evidence on whether applying behavioural insights can drive a meaningful lift in diversity characteristic disclosure. Delivered between May and July 2026, this redesign and implementation planning phase built on the evidence, employee insights and intervention development from the initial study. The evaluation design and outcomes were revised, the communication campaigns redesigned, the theory of change redeveloped, the MS Form reviewed and advised on and outstanding implementation questions resolved with Kier and YFF. Following a final implementation workshop on 16th June 2026, the trial protocol, campaign materials and supporting delivery plans were finalised.

Table 1: Key findings related to the new intervention and evaluation approach

Area of focus	Key findings
Trial and	The design is a two-arm randomised controlled trial comparing a

intervention design	standard communication campaign to a behaviourally-enhanced one. • All trial emails are dispatched directly to Kier staff via Power Automate. • The standard arm features an information-heavy corporate-style email, containing detailed organisational objectives and is issued by the generic "Inclusion Team". • The behaviourally-enhanced arm leverages several behavioural design features: it shortens the message, introduces first-name personalisation, gives a clear completion time estimate, applies a dynamic social norm, highlights individual employee-benefits, features a prominent call to action and is signed by a recognised, trusted messenger (Kier's Sustainability Director).
Outcomes	The primary outcome is the number of in-scope diversity characteristics disclosed by young employees aged 16-24, scored on a scale from 0 to 9. The secondary outcome is the exact same measure as for the primary outcome, but among a subset of employees aged 25 and over. Disclosure is captured via MS Forms over a fixed four-week period (more detail in the "Data sources for impact evaluation" section). The core definition of "disclosure" excludes "prefer not to say" responses. The evaluation captures nine in-scope baseline characteristics: disability status, neurodiversity, gender identity, transgender/gender reassignment, sexual orientation, ethnicity, social mobility, religion and carer status
Data sources for impact evaluation	The impact evaluation will rely on three separate datasets. The MS Forms dataset provides post-campaign disclosure results (i.e., the main trial outcomes). Background metrics pulled from Kier's HR system include historical disclosure (used only as a covariate in the analysis and a randomisation stratification variable), age ranges, and employee join dates. Finally, email send logs will track exact

	delivery timelines across the two arms.
Sample size	The final sample encompasses all Kier employees possessing a valid work email account and active inbox. Employees who leave the company mid-trial are omitted from final datasets. • For the primary analysis focusing on young employees, the cohort will consist of an estimated n = 757 employees aged 16-24. • For the secondary analysis, the cohort will consist of an estimated n = 8,885 employees aged 25 and over.
Randomisation	Randomisation will take place at the individual employee level to maximise statistical power for the primary analysis focusing on young employees. To ensure balance across treatment groups for key characteristics, randomisation is stratified using two baseline variables: previous disclosure history and age category. Spillover risks are deemed minimal, due to the individual, private nature of email delivery and all employees in the trial will receive an email, regardless of which group they are allocated to.
Implementation and process evaluation	The implementation and process evaluation (IPE) assesses delivery fidelity and evaluates how staff and participants experience the intervention. Quantitative monitoring data will be used to verify that email send records align with original randomised files. The IPE will also draw on qualitative interviews with two groups: 1) Kier employees who received the communications, and 2) Kier project contacts who supported the trial implementation. These will be analysed thematically using the Framework approach. To counteract expected summer drop-offs, the employee recruitment pool for qualitative interviews has been expanded from 50 to 150 contacts to secure a target of 15 completed individual employee interviews, supplemented by paired interviews with up to 6 implementation staff members. Topic guides have specifically been updated to explore employee trust and ease using the MS

	Form.
Economic evaluation	A targeted cost analysis will use the established 'ingredients' method to map out operational resource requirements. The evaluation calculates the specific cost per employee and the standardised cost per unit change in data disclosure. The input required to estimate the cost metrics will be derived by distributing structured cost pro-formas to project staff, conducting process-mapping exercises during interviews, and monetising staff hours using aggregate grade-level salary information from Kier's HR system. It will also outline a framework of hypothetical employer archetypes to estimate how implementation costs could scale outside of Kier.
Data sharing	Evaluation strictly uses pseudonymised employee IDs. The unique identifiers are encrypted uniformly across all internal data owners at Kier before transfer, ensuring BIT never receives direct personal identifiers. Data exchange is restricted entirely to access-controlled sharepoint directories. The project operates under the original Data Sharing Agreement signed in October 2025, with Data Protection Impact Assessment files fully updated to encompass the revised trial and data collection approach.
Ethics	The structural adjustments to the intervention design and the pivot to MS Forms triggered a formal repeat ethics review by BIT internal ethics reviewers, with full approval officially granted on 17 June 2026. The review determined that processing special category variables (such as sexual orientation, transgender status, and disability indicators) introduces a high risk that requires strict mitigation. Safeguards include data minimisation, secure isolated storage, and entirely aggregated reporting outputs where zero individual identities can be inferred. To maintain the robustness of the trial and avoid distorting natural disclosure behaviours, participants are not made aware of the trial or randomised allocation during the trial and evaluation. A comprehensive post-trial debrief will be led by

	Kier for employees. IPE qualitative activities adhere to strict participant safeguarding protocols, with clear opt-in requirements and signposted internal and external mental health support channels.

1. Background

1.1 Aim of the project

Kier is a large UK infrastructure services and construction business employing over 10,000 people across the country, including 700+ young people in early careers roles. Like many employers, Kier collects information on employees' diversity characteristics to understand its workforce, identify where disparities may exist and design more inclusive policies, support and progression routes. Equally, Kier faces challenges with the disclosure of employee diversity characteristics. For example, in 2025, 49% of 16–24-year-old employees did not disclose their social mobility, and across all other employees, 28% did not disclose whether they are neurodiverse or not. This means that Kier cannot accurately measure and track its progress towards inclusion goals or take adequate countermeasures to prevent any negative consequences due to poor data coverage.

This project aims to understand whether communication campaigns can increase the number of Kier employees who disclose their diversity information. This work is funded by Youth Futures as part of its What Works for Recruitment and Retention programme, which aims to build evidence on how organisations can create more equitable routes into and to remain in good work for young people. The primary focus is on employees aged 16-24, reflecting YFF's focus, while also including employees aged 25+ to generate wider organisational learning.

The initial feasibility study, completed in January 2026, concluded that a three-arm randomised controlled trial (RCT) of communication campaigns was feasible in principle. However, subsequent shifts to operational constraints made that design undeliverable. The original design relied on Kier's internal HR system, to measure disclosure outcomes for all employees, including those who received no campaign communication. When Kier's HR system could no longer be used for outcome data collection, the trial moved to MS Forms. Because employees had to be contacted and given a link to the form for their disclosure data to be captured, it was no longer possible to retain a pure no-communication control group. This extended feasibility study therefore focused on developing a revised design that addressed these challenges: a two-arm trial comparing a standard communication campaign with a behaviourally-enhanced campaign, using a Microsoft (MS) Form as the disclosure and outcome data collection route.

Rather than repeating the initial findings, this report focuses on the work undertaken to adapt the design, confirm that the revised trial can be delivered robustly, and prepare Kier, YFF and BIT for implementation. For more information on the initial feasibility study

and the wider intervention, evaluation and implementation considerations, please consult the initial feasibility study report.

1.2 Aim of the feasibility study

The aim of the extended feasibility study was to determine whether the trial could be redesigned and implemented robustly following changes to the original delivery context, while preserving its core purpose: testing whether communication campaigns can increase disclosure of employee diversity characteristics at Kier. Specifically, the study sought to answer four questions.

1. **Could a revised intervention and comparison versions of communications be delivered within Kier's current systems and processes**? This included determining whether the trial could move from three-arms, with a no-communication control, to two-arms where all eligible employees receive a communication campaign, while still producing valuable evidence on the relative effectiveness of different communications.
2. **Could the outcome measurement approach be adapted accordingly**? The original design relied on employees updating their diversity characteristics through Kier's HR system. The revised approach uses an MS Form as the primary data collection tool. This required further feasibility work to check that an MS Form could capture the relevant diversity characteristics, support secure data handling, and provide data suitable for the impact evaluation.
3. **Would the trial remain adequately powered following the design change and updated sample information from Kier?** The revised trial uses employee-level randomisation to compare the standard and behaviourally-enhanced campaigns. The extended feasibility study re-ran power calculations using the latest available information on eligible Kier employees, including employees aged 16-24 and employees aged 25 and over.
4. **Could we confirm the implementation requirements for the revised trial?** This included: clarifying the roles of Kier's Communications team, HR team, Emerging Talent and Inclusion team, and the Sustainability Director; confirming the process for sending campaign emails through Power Automate; agreeing the final campaign materials; and identifying the checks needed to verify that the trial is implemented as intended.

1.3 Feasibility study activities

The extended feasibility study was delivered between May and July 2026. It was a targeted redesign and implementation planning phase, building on the evidence, employee insights and intervention development work completed during the initial

feasibility study. During this phase, BIT completed the following activities:

- **Reviewed updated sample information.** BIT received up-to-date information from Kier on the number of employees eligible to take part in the trial. This was used to re-run the power calculations and informed the revised evaluation design.
- **Revised the evaluation design.** BIT updated the trial design to reflect the operational constraints identified before the extended feasibility study began. This included revising the comparator structure and confirming the randomisation approach.
- **Redesigned the communication campaigns.** To align with the updated trial design, BIT developed new communication campaigns, refined the behavioural rationale for their various features, and finalised the materials in collaboration with YFF and Kier.
- **Consulted Kier stakeholders on implementation questions.** BIT worked with Kier stakeholders to resolve practical design and delivery questions. These included communications sign-off, sender and messenger arrangements, Power Automate delivery, reminder processes, and the format and use of the MS Form.
- **Reviewed the MS Form.** BIT reviewed Kier's MS Form and advised on design. This included advice on question order, wording, response options and presentation of sensitive diversity questions, particularly the disability-related question.
- **Redeveloped the theory of change (ToC).** BIT updated the ToC to reflect the revised intervention and evaluation design. This clarified the mechanisms through which the new campaigns are expected to influence disclosure.
- **Revised the impact evaluation outcomes**. BIT revised the exploratory outcomes of the impact evaluation to reflect the updated trial design. The primary and secondary outcomes remained unchanged since the initial feasibility study.
- **Held a final implementation workshop.** On 16th June 2026, BIT held a final implementation workshop with Kier and YFF. The workshop brought together key implementation colleagues to review the final design, confirm roles and responsibilities, work through the delivery timeline and identify the checks needed to verify implementation.
- **Finalised materials and implementation plans.** Following the workshop, BIT finalised the revised trial protocol, campaign materials and supporting implementation plans with Kier and YFF.

The updated trial protocol was agreed and pre-registered on 30th June 2026, The trial

was launched on 1st July 2026, with the reminder communications sent on 13th and 23rd July. This report marks the conclusion of the extended feasibility study and summarises the additional work undertaken to prepare the revised trial for implementation. The decision was made to produce this extended feasibility study report after finalising the trial protocol to prioritise timely trial launch and avoid additional delays.

2. Intervention design

2.1 Description

This section describes the revised intervention design developed during the extended feasibility study. It sets out the rationale for moving to a two-arm communication campaign trial and describes the various intervention components.

The initial feasibility study recommended two behaviourally informed communication campaigns tested against a pure control group. Both campaigns would have directed employees to update their diversity characteristics through Kier's HR system. The two treatment arms differed primarily in their framing: one used positive framing to emphasise the benefits of disclosure, while the other used prevention-focused negative framing to emphasise how disclosure could help avoid inequitable outcomes in an organisation

Before the extended feasibility study began, the original design faced operational challenges implementing the trial within Kier's HR system that meant it was no longer deliverable in the form proposed. The project therefore moved to a two-arm randomised controlled trial. The two trial arms are:

- **Standard campaign:** a longer, more formal, information-heavy campaign that reflects common employer practice. It explains why Kier is collecting diversity characteristics, includes organisational-level benefits, provides FAQ-style information and is signed by a generic messenger (the Inclusion Team).
- **behaviourally-enhanced campaign:** a shorter, clearer and more personally relevant campaign that applies behavioural insights. Specifically, it places the call to action prominently, uses plainer language, addresses the employee by first name, gives a clear completion time estimate, frames the benefits around the individual, uses a dynamic social norm and is signed by a known and trusted messenger (Kier's Sustainability Director).

The trial therefore no longer tests whether receiving a disclosure campaign communication is better than receiving no communication, and what difference positive versus negative framing makes. Instead, it tests whether a behaviourally-enhanced version of a disclosure campaign is more effective than a standard disclosure campaign. This is a meaningful and more informative comparison for Kier and for other employers as the standard arm represents a plausible "business-as-usual" approach to employer communications, while the enhanced arm tests whether applying behavioural insights can improve outcomes over and above the common-practice approach.

2.1.1 Rationale for using email communication campaigns

Communication campaigns remained the preferred intervention approach for the revised trial as they offered the strongest balance of operational feasibility, scalability and fit with the barriers identified through the initial feasibility study (i.e., the need to understand why disclosure matters, to trust how information will be used, and to have a clear route to act). Campaigns are well suited to diversity characteristic disclosure because the target behaviour is relatively simple (as it is a one-off, low-effort action) but easy to delay or avoid. Communication campaigns are well-suited to address the identified barriers by explaining the purpose of disclosure, reaffirming confidentiality, making the request salient and providing a direct link to the disclosure form, reducing friction and the likelihood of delaying. This approach is supported by BIT's previous work with Arup[1], which suggested that light-touch communications can generate meaningful improvements in disclosure. Within this broader campaign approach, email remained the preferred delivery channel as it provided the best balance of employee reach, operational feasibility and suitability for randomised evaluation. It is a widely used, low-cost channel across employers (making findings more transferable beyond Kier than employer-specific platforms), supports individual-level randomisation, enables consistent delivery of content and scheduled reminders, allows employees to act directly from the message by clicking through to the disclosure form. Scoping discussions with Kier colleagues also determined that emails would be less vulnerable to spillovers compared to other forms of messaging (i.e., a Microsoft Teams notification).

2.1.2 Intervention components

Both trial arms are active communication campaigns. This means that all eligible employees receive a message asking them to disclose their diversity characteristics. The difference between the two arms is *how* that request is communicated.

The standard campaign reflects common employer communication approaches. It provides more detailed information, uses a more formal tone and frames the request primarily around Kier's organisational aims. The behaviourally-enhanced campaign keeps the same core request but applies behavioural insights to make the message shorter, clearer, more personally relevant and easier to act on. Table 1 below summarises the main components of each campaign and the rationale for including them.

[1] The Behavioural Insights Team. (2021). Improving equality, diversity and inclusion starts with good data. Available here: https://www.bi.team/blogs/improving-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-starts-with-good-data/

Table 1: Intervention components

Components	Standard campaign	behaviourally-enhanced campaign (hypothesized mechanism in **bold**)
Core request	Asks employees to complete the diversity characteristics form. This ensures that all employees in the trial receive a clear disclosure request.	Same request. The core behaviour is identical across arms, allowing the trial to isolate the effect of how the request is communicated.
Disclosure route	Includes an embedded link to the MS Form. This reduces friction by giving employees a direct route to disclose their information.	Includes the same link to the MS Form. This arm includes a standalone 'Update my diversity Information' button, to **draw attention and increase clickthrough**.
Explanation of purpose	Explains why Kier is collecting diversity characteristics, with emphasis on organisational aims such as understanding the workforce, supporting inclusion and informing policies.	Explains the purpose of disclosure in a shorter and more personally relevant way, such as tailored benefits and support. The rationale is to **aid understanding of not only why the data matters to Kier, but why it matters for them and their colleagues**.
Email length and style	Uses a longer, more formal and more information- heavy format, including FAQ-style content. This provides detail and reassurance but may require more effort from employees to process.	Uses shorter, clearer and more action-oriented language. This is designed to **reduce cognitive effort, make the key message easier to understand and increase the likelihood that employees act immediately**.
Call to action	Includes a call to action within the body of the email. Employees are asked to complete the form	Places the call to action as a standalone sentence more prominently near the top of the email. This is intended to **make the**

	by the deadline.	**desired action more salient and reduce the chance that employees disengage before reaching the link**.
Confidentiality assurance	Provides reassurance that the information will be handled securely and confidentially. This addresses potential concerns about sharing personal information.	Provides the same reassurance, but in a shorter, more direct way. The rationale is to **maintain trust while avoiding unnecessary complexity or overloading the message**.
Messenger	Signed by Kier's Inclusion Team. This is a generic, credible and relevant organisational messenger for a communication about diversity and inclusion.	Signed by Kier's Sustainability Director. A named senior messenger intends to **signal leadership commitment, increase credibility and make the request feel more personally accountable**.
Personalisation	Does not include first-name personalisation. This reflects a more standard broadcast-style employer communication.	Addresses employees by first name. Personalisation is intended to **make the communication feel more relevant to the recipient and less generic.**
Time estimate	Does not inform employees how long the form may take to complete. Employees may then be uncertain about the level of effort required.	States that the form takes around three minutes to complete. This is intended to **reduce perceived effort and make the task feel easier to start**.
Social norm	Does not include a social norm. The message focuses on the organisational case for disclosure.	Includes a dynamic social norm, noting that the employee would be joining a growing number of employees choosing to share their information. This intends to **normalise**

		disclosure and reduce perceived social risk.
Deadline	Includes a deadline for completing the form. This creates mild urgency and reduces the likelihood that employees postpone the task indefinitely.	Includes the same deadline, framed within a shorter and more action-focused message. This **keeps the request time-bound while maintaining emphasis on ease and salience**.
Reminders	Employees who have not completed the form receive reminder emails. These keep the request salient and address the risk that employees intend to act but forget or delay.	The same reminder emails are sent, matched to the enhanced campaign style. These continue to **emphasise ease, relevance and the deadline**.

The intervention components were selected to address the specific behavioural barriers identified through initial feasibility work. These included limited understanding of why disclosure matters and how the information would be used, perceived sensitivity of the data, low salience of the task, and the risk that employees may intend to disclose but fail to act. The standard-arm addresses these barriers only through explanation and reassurance. The behaviourally-enhanced arm addresses the barriers systematically and comprehensively while reducing cognitive load, increasing personal relevance, making the call to action more prominent and using social motivation.

Employees in both groups will continue to receive routine Kier internal communications unrelated to disclosure during the trial. Full communication texts for both the enhanced and standard campaigns are provided in Appendix 1.

2.2 Theory of change

The ToC in Figure 1 sets out how the two communication campaigns are expected to lead to improved outcomes at Kier. Both campaigns are broken down into multiple components, each representing a specific and observable element. Treating the campaigns as a set of discrete components is important because each one activates a

different part of the causal chain. Separating the campaigns in this way makes the underlying logic more transparent and allows the evaluation to consider not only whether the communication campaigns work as a whole, but also how specific features contribute to changes in disclosure outcomes. For example, including a direct link to the disclosure form should make it easier and quicker for employees to disclose their information, which increases the number of employees engaging in disclosure.

There is substantial continuity between the interventions developed during the initial feasibility study and the revised interventions described in this report. In both designs, employees receive an email encouraging them to disclose their diversity information voluntarily. The campaigns explain why Kier collects this information and provide reassurance about confidentiality, addressing the barriers relating to understanding and trust identified during the initial feasibility work. They also retain several common delivery features: the email draws attention to the request, a direct link reduces the effort required to disclose, reminders maintain salience, and a deadline creates mild urgency.

The principal operational change is the route through which disclosure takes place. In the initial design, employees would have updated their information in Kier's HR system. In the revised design, both campaigns direct employees to an MS Form. While the platform has changed, the intended mechanism remains the same: providing a direct route to disclosure should reduce friction and make it easier for employees to act.

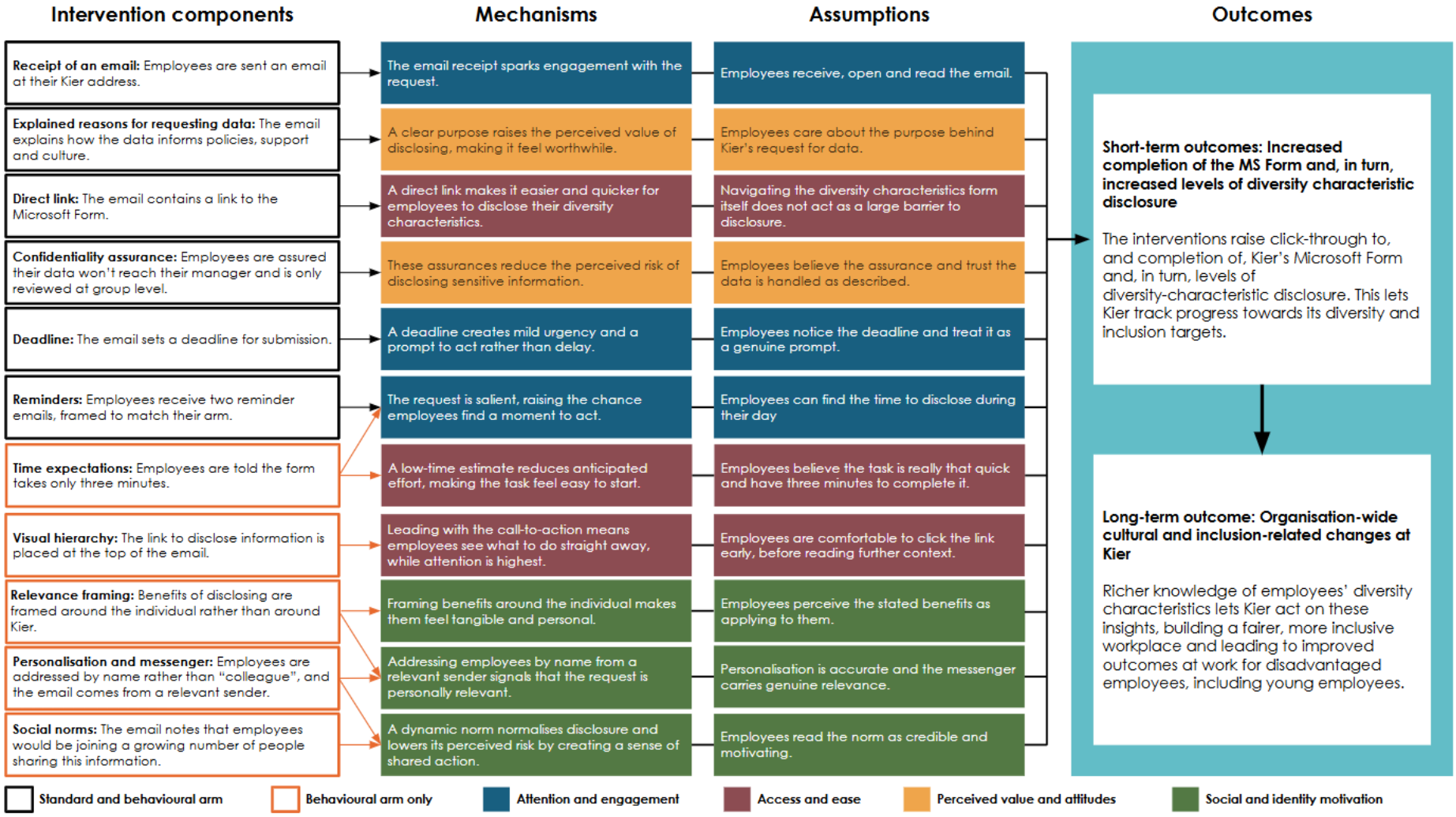
The revised trial also differs from the initial design in how the two trial arms are constructed. Rather than comparing two behaviourally informed campaigns with a no-communication control group, it compares a standard workplace communication with a behaviourally enhanced version. Both arms therefore contain the core components described above. The enhanced campaign adds a set of features intended to make the request easier to process, more personally relevant and more motivating:

- Time-expectations, letting employees know the form will only take them three minutes reduces anticipated effort and creates a sense of ease over starting the task.
- Visual hierarchy, which places the button to disclose at the top of the email, where engagement and attention is highest.
- Relevance framing, which uses individual-benefits to make them feel personal and tangible - rather than more vague, organisational benefits.
- Personal relevance, through the use of personalisation by using employees' first name in place of "colleague" and a trusted messenger (Kier's Sustainability Director).

- Social norms - a dynamic social norm - telling employees that they would be joining a growing number of people sharing their information - lowers the perceived risk and creates a sense of shared action.

These mechanisms operate only if a set of assumptions holds, as described in Figure 1. To summarise, employees must open and read the email, trust that data is handled as described, navigate the MS Form without difficulty, and, for the enhanced arm, find the personalisation accurate and the benefits, time estimate and social norm credible. If these conditions hold, the interventions are expected to raise click-through, MS Form completion and, in turn, disclosure levels. Longer term, richer knowledge of employees' diversity characteristics lets Kier build a fairer, more inclusive workplace, improving outcomes for disadvantaged employees, including young employees.

Figure 1: Theory of change



3. Evaluation design

3.1 Impact evaluation

Though the aim of the impact evaluation remains unchanged since the initial feasibility study, the trial design changed to no longer include a pure control group. Under the original design, the intervention arms would have been compared with a group receiving no disclosure campaign, making it possible to estimate whether each campaign increased disclosure relative to the absence of communication. In the revised design, all employees receive an active campaign: either the standard campaign or the behaviourally-enhanced campaign. Both include components expected to support disclosure and are therefore anticipated to have a positive effect on disclosure.

Accordingly, the evaluation will not estimate the absolute effect of either campaign compared with no campaign. Instead, it will test whether the behaviourally-enhanced campaign increases disclosure relative to the standard campaign. This distinction is important when interpreting the findings. A statistically significant difference would indicate that the enhanced campaign was more effective than the standard campaign. However, an absence of a detectable difference would not necessarily undermine the ToC. It could mean that the additional behavioural features did not produce a sufficiently large incremental effect, or that both campaigns generated similar positive effects. Without a no-communication control group, the evaluation cannot distinguish between those possibilities or determine the absolute effect of either campaign.

3.1.1 Objectives

Though the overarching aim of the impact evaluation remains unchanged since the initial feasibility study (i.e., to estimate the effect of the interventions on the number of in-scope diversity characteristics disclosed by employees at the end of the trial), the research questions have been amended to reflect the shift from a three-arm trial to a two-arm trial comparing behaviourally-enhanced communications to a standard communications approach (rather than a pure control) and are as follows:

- RQ1: What is the impact of the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign, relative to the standard communications campaign, on the number of in-scope diversity characteristics disclosed by Kier employees aged 16-24 (core

definition)[2]?

- RQ2: What is the impact of the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign, relative to the standard communications campaign, on the number of in-scope diversity characteristics disclosed by Kier employees aged 25+ (core definition)?
- RQ3: What impact of the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign, relative to the standard communications campaign, on the proportion of Kier employees who disclose all in-scope diversity characteristics (core definition)? This will be analysed separately for Kier employees aged 16-24 and 25+.
- RQ4: What is the impact of the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign, relative to the standard communications campaign, on the proportion of Kier employees who disclose the following characteristics individually: neurodivergence status, disability status, ethnicity and social mobility (core definition)? This will be analysed separately for Kier employees aged 16-24 and 25+.
    - RQ4.1: What is the impact of the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign, relative to the standard communications campaign, on the proportion of Kier employees who disclose disadvantaged minority group status for each of these characteristics?
    - RQ4.2: What is the impact of the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign, relative to the standard communications campaign, on the proportion of Kier employees who disclose non-disadvantaged majority group status for each of these characteristics?
- RQ5: What is the impact of the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign, relative to the standard communications campaign, on the number of in-scope diversity characteristics (expanded definition) by Kier employees? This will be analysed separately for Kier employees aged 16-24 and 25+.
- RQ6: What is the impact of the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign, relative to the standard communications campaign, on the proportion of Kier employees who disclose all in-scope diversity characteristics (expanded definition)? This will be analysed separately for Kier employees aged 16-24 and 25+.

[2] As in the first feasibility study, the 'core definition' of disclosure excludes individuals who respond to a given diversity question but select 'prefer not to say' as their answer. The 'expanded definition' of disclosure includes 'prefer not to say' responses.

- RQ7: What is the impact of the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign, relative to the standard communications campaign, on the number of in-scope diversity characteristics disclosed by Kier employees aged 25+ (core definition)?
- RQ8: To what extent does employee tenure (based on continuous length of service) moderate the impact of the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign on the number of in-scope diversity characteristics disclosed by Kier employees aged 25+ (core definition), relative to the standard communications campaign?

3.1.2 Sample

The participant sample has changed following the extended feasibility study. In the initial feasibility study, the sample was expected to include Kier employees with both a valid Kier email address and access to Kier's HR system's self-service. In the revised trial design, the sample now includes all Kier employees with a valid Kier email address, regardless of whether they have access to Kier's HR system. This reflects the shift from collecting disclosure data through the HR system to collecting it through MS Forms.

Employees who leave Kier during the trial period will be excluded from the analysis. We expect the rate of attrition to be very low, as only 1.2% of employees exited Kier between the HR system datasets received from Kier in September and October 2025. A more significant risk is that employees may be on annual leave during the trial period, now in July 2026, and may therefore fail to see the email communications. To assess the scale of this issue, Kier will provide BIT with summary data on the number of employees in each age group who are on leave during the trial period. BIT will use this to estimate the extent to which annual leave is likely to impact the results.

The sample for the primary analysis will consist of Kier employees aged 16-24 with a valid Kier email address, estimated at 757 employees. The sample for the secondary analysis will consist of Kier employees aged 25 and over with a valid Kier email address, estimated at 8,885 employees.

3.1.3 Outcome measures

In-scope characteristics

Following the extended feasibility study, it was determined that nine in-scope characteristics would be considered for this evaluation, rather than the original eight: disability status, neurodiversity, gender identity, transgender/gender reassignment, sexual orientation, ethnicity, social mobility, religion and carer status. The additional characteristic is ethnicity, which was previously excluded due to high baseline disclosure

levels and platform limitations, as ethnicity data is recorded in a different location from other diversity information in Kier's HR system. Baseline disclosure will be reset to zero for all employees and user pathways within Kier's HR system are no longer a consideration, owing to the switch to MS Forms.. This effectively removes the barriers that led to ethnicity being excluded from the original scope.

Outcome measures

The primary and secondary outcomes remain unchanged from the initial feasibility study. The primary outcome is the number of in-scope characteristics disclosed by young Kier employees (aged 16-24) one month after the start of the campaigns (core definition, i.e., excluding 'prefer not to say' responses). The secondary outcome is the number of in-scope characteristics disclosed by Kier employees aged 25 and up one month after the start of the campaign (again using the core definition of disclosure).

An exploratory outcome has been amended. In the initial feasibility study, this outcome covered disability status, neurodiversity status and social mobility only. Following the extended feasibility study, ethnicity has been added as a fourth characteristic of specific interest, given that it also relates to one of YFF's priority groups of disadvantaged young people and measuring disclosure of ethnicity is now operationally feasible. The updated exploratory outcome is therefore:

- **Whether the employee disclosed each of the following characteristics individually: neurodivergence status, disability status, ethnicity and social mobility.** This uses the core definition and will allow BIT to assess whether the interventions had a differential impact on disclosure of the diversity characteristics of particular interest to YFF and Kier.

This outcome will also capture:

- **Whether the employee selected a disadvantaged-minority-group response for each of the above characteristics.** This set of outcomes is intended to capture whether one communication campaign, more than the other, shifted disclosure of disadvantaged minority group status (disabled, neurodiverse, minority ethnicity, low social mobility).
- **Whether the employee selected a non-disadvantaged-majority-group response for each of the above characteristics.** This set of outcomes is intended to capture whether one communication campaign, more than the other, shifted disclosure of non-disadvantaged majority group status (not disabled, neurotypical, majority ethnicity, high social mobility).

3.1.4 Data sources

Datasets

For the analysis specified above to be viable, BIT must be able to access and link the datasets listed in Table 2 below. Kier's data team has confirmed that these datasets will be shared prior to analysis.

The main change from the initial feasibility study is the source of disclosure data. In the initial feasibility study, disclosure data was expected to be drawn from Kier's HR system. Following the extended feasibility study, disclosure data will instead be collected through MS Forms. The HR system will still be used, but only as a source of additional employee-level data to be extracted and shared by Kier for use as stratification variable and covariates in the analysis, as specified below. Email sends logs will be shared by Kier and used to check that randomisation worked as intended and the communications reached the target population.

Table 2: Summary of datasets

Dataset	Description
MS Forms	Provides data on employee disclosure following the communication campaigns.
Kier's HR system	Contains previous disclosure data for all in-scope characteristics at the employee level. Also contains employee information including their age range and the date they started working at Kier.
Email sends logs	Contain data on which emails employees are sent.

Covariates data sources

Following YFF guidance on statistical analysis, we will continue to use a minimal set of covariates for our main analysis.[3] Specifically, we will include:

1. **Previous disclosure**: a composite variable capturing the total number of diversity characteristics previously disclosed by the individual in Kier's HR system, ranging from 0 to 9. This variable will be treated as continuous in the regression model. In the initial feasibility study, this variable captured "baseline disclosure". Following the extended feasibility study, it has been amended to "previous disclosure" to distinguish disclosure data already held in the HR system from disclosure data newly collected through MS Forms.

2. **Join date**. This was originally included to capture potential differences in disclosure between employees who completed diversity information during recruitment/onboarding, with this information then transferred into Kier's HR system, and employees who joined before this process was introduced. This distinction is no longer central to the main analysis, as all employees will now be asked to disclose their diversity information through MS Forms, regardless of their previous disclosure status in Kier's HR system. However, employee join date will be retained as a covariate and will also be used in subgroup analysis to explore whether disclosure varies by employee tenure.

All covariates will be sourced from Kier's HR system and provided to BIT by Kier's data team.

Data linkage

Data will be linked using pseudonymised employee IDs; this process remains unchanged since the initial feasibility study. In order to compile an analysis dataset, we require unique 'keys' or variables that can be used to identify individuals and link datasets. Employee IDs will be used to identify individuals across datasets. Employee IDs will be pseudonymised by encrypting the numeric employee IDs with a common method across all data owners. Data sharing will be conducted using folders on SharePoint, with access to the required individuals only.

3.1.5 Randomisation

[3] Age group is not included as a covariate, despite being one of the stratification variables, because all analyses are conducted on the two age groups separately (16-24, 25+), making age group unnecessary as a covariate.

The unit of randomisation remains unchanged from the initial feasibility study: employees will continue to be randomised at the individual level. However, the stratification approach has changed. In the initial feasibility study, randomisation was to be stratified by age group and a three-level baseline disclosure variable: disclosed no data, partially disclosed data, or disclosed all data. Following the extended feasibility study, the disclosure stratification variable has been simplified to a two-level previous disclosure variable: employees who have disclosed no or some diversity characteristics, and employees who have disclosed all relevant diversity characteristics. This change was made to reduce the burden of data provision from Kier and to improve efficiency in accessing this information. However, we will still be stratifying randomisation by age group using the two-level indicator for previous disclosure.

3.1.6 Power calculations

Power calculations determine the minimum detectable effect size (MDES) we are able to observe for a given trial setup (e.g., number of employees, number of trial arms, significance level). In the initial feasibility study, the power calculations were based on a three-arm trial in which two treatment arms were compared with a pure control group, using existing disclosure levels in Kier's HR system as the baseline. Following the extended feasibility study, the design is now a two-arm trial comparing a standard communication campaign with a behaviourally-enhanced communication campaign, with disclosure collected from scratch through MS Forms.

We therefore examined how the MDES changes based on (i) the sample used to analyse the primary and secondary outcome measures, and (ii) a range of assumptions for the estimated MS Form response rates for the standard group (low: 15%, medium: 30%, high: 50%). For each response rate, we calculated the baseline mean number of characteristics declared per employee. This represents a weighted average combining the extensive margin (i.e., what proportion of participants open the email and click on the MS Form link) and the intensive margin (i.e., of those who do open the email and click the link, how many characteristics do they disclose).[4]

[4] The baseline mean number of characteristics declared per employee is calculated by multiplying the estimated response rate by the estimated mean disclosure of responders. This represents the average number of diversity characteristics we expect an employee in the control group to disclose by the end of the trial period.

Table 3: Results of power calculations

	Assumed MS Form email response rate for standard communications arm[5]		
	15%	**30%**	**50%**
Primary outcome: Number of in-scope characteristics disclosed (out of 9 possible diversity characteristics) by 16-24-year-old Kier employees (n = 757)			
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN EACH ARM	378		
BASELINE: Mean number of characteristics declared per employee	1.22	2.43	4.05
MINIMUM DETECTABLE EFFECT SIZE (MDES) AS NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS DISCLOSED PER EMPLOYEE	0.59	0.76	0.84
MDES AS PERCENTAGE OF GAP TO FULL DISCLOSURE	7.6%	11.6%	16.9%
Secondary outcome: Number of in-scope characteristics disclosed by Kier employees aged 25 and over (n = 8,885)			
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES IN EACH ARM	4,442		
BASELINE: Mean number of characteristics disclosed in standard group	1.04	2.07	3.43

[5] This refers to the percentage of employees in the standard communications campaign arm who open the email and click on the MS Form link.

MINIMUM DETECTABLE EFFECT SIZE (MDES) AS NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL CHARACTERISTICS DISCLOSED PER EMPLOYEE	0.15	0.19	0.21
MDES AS PERCENTAGE OF GAP TO FULL DISCLOSURE	1.9%	2.8%	3.8%
Linear model estimated by OLS, using baseline number of characteristics disclosed as covariates.			

Under a hurdle model framework[6] where responding individuals disclose on average 8.1 characteristics (ages 16-24) and 6.9 characteristics (ages 25+)[7], the trial is powered to detect an MDES of 0.76 (for the 16-24 group) and 0.19 (for the 25+ group) additional characteristics, respectively. This is driven by the extensive margin. The baseline average of characteristics disclosed per responding individual is expected to be quite high (8.1 and 6.9 for each age group, respectively). As such, the model relies on the behaviourally-enhanced communications campaign driving up the overall form completion rate by an additional 9.4 percentage points lift in MS Form completions for young employees and 2.8 percentage points for employees ages 25 and above.

Although the two campaigns differ in several important components that are well supported by the behavioural science literature, they also share a number of core features. An incremental increase of 9.4 percentage points among younger employees may therefore be at the upper end or higher than what is plausible for the behaviourally-enhanced campaign relative to the standard campaign. The trial may consequently be unable to detect smaller but still practically meaningful differences between the two arms for the 16-24 age group. However, given the larger sample size for employees aged 25 and up (n = 8,885), we are confident that we will be well-powered to detect small effects among this employee subgroup.

[6] A hurdle model is a two-part method that specifies one process for zero counts and a second process for positive counts, which are contingent on clearing a threshold, or hurdle. If the hurdle is not cleared, this results in a count of zero. In this instance, the initial hurdle is respondents opening the MS Form. Only if they clear this hurdle can employees get a positive count for disclosure.

[7] The average number of disclosed characteristics is estimated using disclosure data from October 2025, which was sourced from Kier's HR system and provided to BIT by Kier.

3.2 Implementation and process evaluation

The IPE approach remains largely unchanged from the initial feasibility study. It will still assess whether the revised trial is implemented as intended, how the campaigns are delivered in practice, and how employees and implementation staff experience the process. As in the initial feasibility study, the IPE will use two activities: a review of implementation data and qualitative interviews. The analysis approach also remains the same: implementation data will be analysed descriptively, while qualitative interview data will be analysed thematically using the Framework approach.

Activity 1: Review of implementation data

As was recommended in the initial feasibility study, BIT will review implementation data to check whether the communication campaigns are delivered as planned. This will include comparing email send data against the randomisation file and documenting any deviations from planned delivery. BIT staff email addresses will also be seeded into each trial arm to check whether the emails and reminders are received as expected and whether the content matches the assigned campaign.

The main change from the initial feasibility study is that the review will focus on send data only. The initial feasibility study left open whether email open and click-through data would be available. During the extended feasibility study, Kier confirmed that these data will not be available. This means the IPE will be able to assess whether each campaign was sent to the correct employees, but not whether employees opened the emails or clicked the form link.

Activity 2: Qualitative interviews

As was recommended in the initial feasibility study, BIT will conduct qualitative interviews with Kier staff involved in implementation and with employees who received one of the campaigns. These interviews will explore delivery experience, perceived barriers and enablers to disclosure, employee reactions to the communications, and whether the ToC mechanisms operated as expected.

Two changes were made to this activity during the extended feasibility study. First, the number of employees who received one of the two disclosure campaigns and who will be contacted for interview recruitment increased from 50 to 150, while the target remains up to 15 completed employee interviews. This reflects lower expected sign-up rates during the summer and is intended to increase the likelihood of achieving the target sample across relevant groups, including both trial arms, different age groups and employees who did and did not disclose. Second, the topic guides were updated to reflect the revised trial context and can be found in the Appendix of this report. In

particular, they now include explicit questions on the use of an MS Form as the disclosure route, including whether employees found the form credible, clear and easy to use.

3.3 Economic evaluation

As was recommended in the initial feasibility study, BIT will conduct a cost analysis to estimate and compare the costs of delivering the two communication campaigns. The broad evaluation approach has not changed substantially following the extended feasibility study: the analysis will continue to use an ingredients-based approach and will capture Kier staff time associated with adapting and delivering the campaigns, as well as the time Kier employees spend reporting their diversity characteristics.

The main change is to the counterfactual available for estimating changes in disclosure. In the initial feasibility study, the three-arm design meant that additional employee disclosure activity could be estimated by comparing each treatment arm with a pure control group. Following the extended feasibility study, there is no pure control group; instead, the trial compares the behaviourally-enhanced campaign with the standard campaign. As a result, any cost per unit change in disclosure will need to be interpreted as the incremental cost-effectiveness of the behaviourally-enhanced campaign relative to the standard campaign, rather than the effect of either campaign relative to no communication. Second, employee time costs will relate to completing the MS Form, rather than updating diversity information in Kier's HR system.

4. Risks and limitations

4.1 Risks

The table below summarises risks that are new to the revised trial design, or that have become more salient because of changes made during the extended feasibility study. Several risks were initially identified as part of the first feasibility study, which are not long relevant, such as the risk that the process to update disclosure on Kier's HR system requires multiple stages and therefore could deter some employees from updating their characteristics.

The table does not repeat risks already identified in the initial feasibility study unless the revised design changes how they need to be managed. Impact (I) and likelihood (L) are rated as low (L), medium (M) or high (H).

Table 4: Risk register for the revised trial

Risk	I	L	Adaptations (What has already been done to address this risk?)	Mitigations (What is yet to be done to address this risk?)
Employees may not be confident sharing diversity information through MS Forms. Because MS Forms	M	M	Both campaign arms explain why the information is being collected through MS Forms and include reassurance on confidentiality and data handling. BIT reviewed	Employee feedback and concerns will be probed through qualitative interviews, including explicit questions on the credibility and acceptability of MS Forms. Kier will use the

is not Kier's usual route for diversity disclosure, some employees may be uncertain whether the request is legitimate, how the data will be used, or whether the form is secure.			the form and advised on survey design and wording, including for sensitive diversity questions. BIT also provided implementation staff with agreed wording on the use of the MS Form and how the data would be handled, so they could respond clearly and consistently to any employee questions.	agreed wording if employees raise questions about the use of MS Forms for this purpose.
Employees may be confused about why they are being asked to disclose through MS Forms if they have previously shared diversity information through Kier's internal HR system. This could reduce trust in the request or lead employees to assume that no further action is needed.	M	M	The campaign wording explicitly tells employees that they should complete the MS Form even if they have previously shared diversity information through Kier's HR system. This explanation is included across both trial arms so that the disclosure route is clear and consistent. BIT also provided Kier with agreed wording to use if employees query why they are being asked to disclose again through MS Forms.	Kier will use the agreed wording if employees raise questions about re-disclosure in MS Forms. The qualitative interviews will also explore whether the disclosure route caused confusion and whether the campaign explanation was clear.

Reminder targeting depends on accurate and timely identification of employees who have not disclosed. If MS Forms completion data are not processed quickly or accurately, some employees may receive unnecessary reminders or fail to receive a reminder when intended.	M	M	BIT discussed reminder targeting with Kier during the extended feasibility study, and Kier confirmed that they have the capability and capacity to track form completions in time for each reminder. Kier also developed two identical versions of the MS Form, one for each campaign arm, to make it easier to track completions by trial arm.	BIT will remind Kier staff which employees should receive each reminder before the reminder date, including ahead of the first reminder on 13 July. Any deviations from the planned reminder process will be documented and considered when interpreting the trial findings.

4.2 Limitations

Three new limitations arose from the revised trial design developed during the extended feasibility study.

- First, the revised trial no longer includes a pure control group. It will estimate the relative effect of the behaviourally-enhanced campaign compared with the standard campaign, but it will not estimate the effect of sending a disclosure campaign compared with no campaign. As a result, if disclosure increases in both trial arms, the evaluation will show whether the enhanced campaign performs better than the standard campaign, but not the absolute impact of running a campaign.

- Second, the outcome measures capture disclosure through a new system rather than the amount of genuinely new diversity information gained by Kier. Employees are asked to complete the MS Form even where they have already disclosed the same characteristics in Kier's HR system. A completed response may therefore represent re-disclosure of information Kier already holds, rather than an increase in the completeness of its workforce data. This is particularly relevant for employees aged 16-24, among whom existing disclosure in Kier's HR system is already above 90%. If the behaviourally-enhanced campaign is especially effective at prompting employees with already-complete HR system records to submit the form again, it could produce a positive headline effect on the trial outcomes while generating little or no additional information for Kier. The findings should therefore be interpreted as effects on disclosure behaviour within the MS Form, not necessarily as equivalent effects on organisational information gain.

- Third, the implementation and process evaluation will not include email open or click-through data. It will therefore be possible to verify whether emails were sent as intended, but not whether individual employees opened the emails (and were therefore exposed to the interventions as intended), or clicked the form link. This limits the evaluation's ability to distinguish between non-exposure, low engagement with the email, and unwillingness or inability to complete the form.

5. Ethics

The revised trial design was submitted for a repeat ethics review ahead of launch, and ethical approval was received on 17th June 2026. This was necessary because the extended feasibility study changed the trial design, interventions and disclosure route. The repeat review considered whether these changes introduced any new ethical risks, and whether the safeguards agreed during the initial feasibility study remained appropriate for the revised trial.

The review concluded that the revised design did not introduce new substantive ethical risks. The main ethical considerations remained the same as in the initial feasibility study: the trial involves sensitive and special category data, including information about employees' personal characteristics; and the evaluation requires careful handling of transparency, consent, confidentiality and data protection.

The main additional issue considered in the repeat ethics review was the use of MS Forms as the disclosure route. This could create uncertainty for employees who expected to disclose through Kier's usual HR system , or who had already shared information through the HR system. To mitigate this, the campaign materials explain why employees are being asked to complete the MS Form, including if they have previously shared diversity information elsewhere. BIT also provided Kier with agreed wording to use if employees ask questions about the form or how their data will be used.

The Data Sharing Agreement (DSA) signed in October 2025 remained applicable to the revised trial, as it continued to cover the planned data sharing arrangements between Kier and BIT. BIT and Kier also updated their Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) documentation to ensure the revised trial design, including the use of MS Forms, was accurately reflected before implementation.

6. Lessons learned

For details on lessons learnt relating to intervention feasibility and evaluation design, employee and organisational engagement, and project management and coordination, please consult Section 6 of the initial feasibility study report. The extended feasibility study provided an opportunity to apply lessons identified in the first one, rather than generate a separate set of new lessons. In particular, the extended feasibility study placed greater emphasis on bringing all Kier stakeholders together early, including those responsible for communications, HR, data, inclusion and senior sign-off. Building in multiple touchpoints with these stakeholders helped ensure that operational constraints were surfaced before implementation, that roles and responsibilities were clear, and that the revised design was checked with the teams who would actually need to deliver it. By working through the trial changes collectively, the project team was able to preserve the core evaluation purpose while adapting the trial to a two-arm design using MS Forms as the disclosure route.

7. Conclusions and recommendations

7.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings from the extended feasibility study, we concluded that an RCT of two behaviourally-informed communication campaigns is feasible and has strong potential to generate valuable evidence. Key insights are summarised in Table 5 below.

Table 5: Key findings related to the new intervention and evaluation approach

Area of focus	Key findings
Trial and intervention design	The design is a two-arm randomised controlled trial comparing a standard communication campaign to a behaviourally-enhanced one. • All trial emails are dispatched directly to Kier staff via Power Automate. • The standard arm features an information-heavy corporate-style email, containing detailed organisational objectives and is issued by the generic "Inclusion Team". • The behaviourally-enhanced arm leverages several behavioural design features: it shortens the message, introduces first-name personalisation, gives a clear completion time estimate, applies a dynamic social norm, highlights individual employee-benefits, features a prominent call to action and is signed by a recognised, trusted messenger (Kier's Sustainability Director).
Outcomes	The primary outcome is the number of in-scope diversity characteristics disclosed by young employees aged 16-24, scored on a scale from 0 to 9. The secondary outcome is the exact same measure as for the primary outcome, but among a subset of employees aged 25 and

	over. Disclosure is captured via MS Forms over a fixed four-week period (more detail in the "Data sources for impact evaluation" section). The core definition of "disclosure" excludes "prefer not to say" responses. The evaluation captures nine in-scope baseline characteristics: disability status, neurodiversity, gender identity, transgender/gender reassignment, sexual orientation, ethnicity, social mobility, religion and carer status
Data sources for impact evaluation	The impact evaluation will rely on three separate datasets. The MS Forms dataset provides post-campaign disclosure results (i.e., the main trial outcomes). Background metrics pulled from Kier's internal HR system include historical disclosure (used only as a covariate in the analysis and a randomisation stratification variable), age ranges, and employee join dates. Finally, email send logs will track exact delivery timelines across the two arms.
Sample size	The final sample encompasses all Kier employees possessing a valid work email account and active inbox. Employees who leave the company mid-trial are omitted from final datasets. • For the primary analysis focusing on young employees, the cohort will consist of an estimated n = 757 employees aged 16-24. • For the secondary analysis, the cohort will consist of an estimated n = 8,885 employees aged 25 and over.
Randomisation	Randomisation will take place at the individual employee level to maximise statistical power for the primary analysis focusing on young employees. To ensure balance across treatment groups for key characteristics, randomisation is stratified using two baseline variables: previous disclosure history and age category. Spillover risks are deemed minimal, due to the individual, private nature of email delivery and all employees in the trial will receive an email, regardless of which group they are allocated to.

Implementation and process evaluation	The implementation and process evaluation (IPE) assesses delivery fidelity and evaluates how staff and participants experience the intervention. Quantitative monitoring data will be used to verify that email send records align with original randomised files. The IPE will also draw on qualitative interviews with two groups: 1) Kier employees who received the communications, and 2) Kier project contacts who supported the trial implementation. These will be analysed thematically using the Framework approach. To counteract expected summer drop-offs, the employee recruitment pool for qualitative interviews has been expanded from 50 to 150 contacts to secure a target of 15 completed individual employee interviews, supplemented by paired interviews with up to 6 implementation staff members. Topic guides have specifically been updated to explore employee trust and ease using the MS Form.
Economic evaluation	A targeted cost analysis will use the established 'ingredients' method to map out operational resource requirements. The evaluation calculates the specific cost per employee and the standardised cost per unit change in data disclosure. The input required to estimate the cost metrics will be derived by distributing structured cost pro-formas to project staff, conducting process-mapping exercises during interviews, and monetising staff hours using aggregate grade-level salary information from Kier's HR system. It will also outline a framework of hypothetical employer archetypes to estimate how implementation costs could scale outside of Kier.
Data sharing	Evaluation strictly uses pseudonymised employee IDs. The unique identifiers are encrypted uniformly across all internal data owners at Kier before transfer, ensuring BIT never receives direct personal identifiers. Data exchange is restricted entirely to access-controlled sharepoint directories. The project operates under the original Data Sharing Agreement signed in October 2025, with Data Protection Impact Assessment files fully updated to encompass the revised trial and data collection approach.

Ethics	The structural adjustments to the intervention design and the pivot to MS Forms triggered a formal repeat ethics review by BIT internal ethics reviewers, with full approval officially granted on 17 June 2026. The review determined that processing special category variables (such as sexual orientation, transgender status, and disability indicators) introduces a high risk that requires strict mitigation. Safeguards include data minimisation, secure isolated storage, and entirely aggregated reporting outputs where zero individual identities can be inferred. To maintain the robustness of the trial and avoid distorting natural disclosure behaviours, participants are not made aware of the trial or randomised allocation during the trial and evaluation. A comprehensive post-trial debrief will be led by Kier for employees. IPE qualitative activities adhere to strict participant safeguarding protocols, with clear opt-in requirements and signposted internal and external mental health support channels.

7.2 Next steps

The trial protocol was finalised and pre-registered on 30th June 2026. The trial launched on 1st July 2026, with initial communications sent to Kier employees. Two reminders will follow on 13th and 20th July, and the trial will close on 29th July 2026. BIT will receive the final outcome data a few days later. Once received, BIT will analyse the data and complete the IPE and economic evaluation activities between July and September 2026. Findings from all evaluation streams will then be brought together in an evaluation report, expected to be finalised in collaboration with YFF and Kier by the end of October 2026.

8. Appendix

8.1 Interview topic guides

Interview with Kier staff involved in intervention implementation

Please note that these interviews are intended to be conducted in paired or triad formats. Depending on who attends each session and their specific involvement in the intervention and trial, not all questions listed below will be applicable.

Section 1: Introduction and context setting (Anticipated duration: 5 minutes)

At the start of the interview, the BIT researcher will welcome the participants and thank them for taking part. The researcher will introduce themselves, BIT and BIT's collaboration with Kier. They will also explain the purpose of the interview.

The researcher will then explain that participation is entirely voluntary and that the participants may pause or stop the interview at any stage. They will reassure the participants that all information shared will be kept confidential, that findings will be reported anonymously, and that the data collected will be used only for research purposes. The researcher will also clarify how the information may appear in outputs, such as through anonymised quotations.

The researcher will inform the participants that the interview will be recorded to ensure their views are captured accurately. Before switching on the recorder, the researcher will ask the participants for consent to record the conversation. Once the recording has begun, the researcher will ask again for verbal confirmation of their consent to take part.

Finally, the researcher will check whether the participants have any questions before moving on to the next section.

Section 2: Roles, responsibilities and involvement in implementation (Anticipated duration: 10 minutes)

a. Introductory questions

- To begin with, could you briefly describe your role within Kier and your usual responsibilities within your team?

- Looking specifically at this project, which parts of the communication campaign's development, delivery, oversight or evaluation were you personally involved in (for example, reviewing and signing off the communications, sending the communications, extracting the data)?

b. Team structure and coordination

- How did responsibilities relating to the campaigns and the trial sit across different teams (e.g., Communications, HR, Diversity and Inclusion)?
- Thinking back to when the project was first introduced to you internally, how prepared did you feel to support its delivery?

Section 3: Randomisation, allocation and delivery processes (Anticipated duration: 15 minutes)

a. Allocation and message delivery (RQ1a, RQ2a): Could you talk me through how the randomisation of Kier employees to one of the two campaigns translated into day-to-day delivery?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - How were employee lists received and used?
    - How were the two communication campaigns prepared and sent?
    - How did you ensure the correct version (standard vs behaviourally enhanced) reached the correct employees?
    - How was the automation tool set up and used to send the communications to the right employees?
    - How did you deal with reminders?

b. Monitoring processes (RQ1a, RQ1b): How did communication delivery monitoring work in practice?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - Did you have any logs, tracking spreadsheets or delivery reports in place to check who had been sent each campaign?
    - Were any anomalies identified? How were these investigated? Were

any issues escalated?

c. Challenges and unexpected issues (RQ1b): Were there any challenges, delays or unexpected issues during campaign delivery?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - Missing or incorrect contact details?
    - Scheduling issues?
    - Technical hurdles (e.g., with the automation tool or MS Forms links)?
    - Overlaps or confusion between multiple internal communications?
    - How were these issues resolved?

d. Impact on trial integrity (RQ1c, RQ2c): Do you think any of these issues could have affected the accuracy or consistency of delivery?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - Any situations where an employee might have received the wrong communication campaign (standard instead of behaviourally enhanced or vice versa)?
    - Delays in sending messages or reminders?
    - Any concerns about partial delivery or missed recipients?
    - Any risk of employees discussing the campaigns across groups and influencing each other?

Section 4: Practicality, feasibility and operational experience (Anticipated duration: 15 minutes)

a. Delivery experience (RQ2, RQ4d): From an operational point of view, how easy or difficult was it to deliver the campaigns as planned?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - Any parts that ran particularly smoothly?
    - Any stages that took more time, people or back-and-forth than

expected?

b. Facilitators and barriers (RQ2a): What factors helped support delivery, and what factors hindered it?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - The automation tool?
    - MS Forms?
    - How well teams communicated and handed work over to one another?
    - Clarity of instructions?
    - Staffing capacity?
    - Accuracy of employee data?
    - Competing organisational priorities?

c. Implementer feedback (RQ2d): Did you receive any feedback from colleagues or employees about the communications while the campaign was live?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - Queries or concerns raised?
    - Requests for clarification?
    - Positive reactions or appreciation?

d. Improvements and scalability (RQ2b): Thinking about future roll-outs, what changes - if any - would make these campaigns easier or more efficient to deliver?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - Changes to the wording, layout or templates of the emails?
    - Changes to the steps involved in preparing, sending or monitoring the campaigns?
    - Additional support or guidance needed?

e. Staff perceptions of burden and acceptability (RQ4d): Overall, how practical and acceptable did the campaigns feel from your perspective?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - Time and effort the campaigns added on top of your usual workload?
    - How well the tasks fit alongside the way your team normally works?
    - Willingness to deliver again?

f. Data / IT experience (RQ1b, RQ2c)

- From your perspective, how well did existing data / IT systems support the campaigns?
    - **Potential prompts (if needed):**
        - Data accuracy?
        - Extracting the diversity-disclosure responses from MS Forms?
        - Pseudonymising the data and matching BIT's pseudonymised IDs to Kier records?
- What challenges, if any, arose when preparing or checking data for this project?
    - **Potential prompts (if needed):**
        - Missing or ambiguous data?
        - Turnover or leavers?
- Did any system issues (e.g., delays, extraction problems, access restrictions) have the potential to affect trial outcomes or the consistency of delivery?
- How easy or difficult was it to extract the final diversity-disclosure dataset from MS Forms for the evaluation?

Section 5: Mechanisms and broader reflections (Anticipated duration: 10 minutes)

a. Mechanisms in the ToC (RQ3a): Based on your interactions with employees or colleagues, do you think the campaigns helped:

- (both arms) improve understanding of why Kier collects diversity data?
- (both arms) make disclosure feel easier?
- (both arms) keep disclosure top-of-mind through reminders?
- (both arms) reduce concerns about privacy, discrimination or relevance?
- (both arms) create a sense of urgency to act rather than delay, through the deadline?
- (behaviourally enhanced arm) feel more personally relevant through being addressed by name and coming from a relevant sender?
- (behaviourally enhanced arm) make the benefits feel tangible and personal by framing them around the individual rather than around Kier?

b. Differences by message type (RQ3a, RQ3b): Did you notice any differences in how colleagues responded to the standard communications versus behaviourally enhanced communications?

c. Moderators influencing mechanism strength (RQ3b): Do you think anything made the campaigns more or less effective for some employees than others?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - Ease of accessing and completing the MS Form?
    - Previous experience updating data (e.g., in Oracle)?
    - Views on data privacy?
    - Whether being asked to submit via MS Forms (rather than Oracle) affected trust and willingness?

Section 6: Process mapping and time spent on implementation (Anticipated duration: 15 minutes)

This section supports the economic evaluation. The aim is to capture the time involved in preparing and delivering the campaigns, broken down into discrete tasks. It covers two things: the time Kier actually spent *delivering* the campaigns (intervention delivery), and the time it would take another organisation to *adapt* these materials (intervention development).

a. Completing the cost pro-forma (individually): The researcher first explains how the cost pro-forma works and what each section is asking for. Each participant is then given 3-5 minutes to fill it in individually, recording the tasks they were involved in and their own estimates of time. Completing it independently first means each person commits their own view before the group discussion, reducing the risk of estimates anchoring on whoever speaks first.

b. Discussing the pro-forma (jointly): Once everyone has filled theirs in, we discuss the entries together - comparing how each person approached the tasks, talking through the estimates, and identifying anything that was missed. Could you each walk me through what you recorded, starting with the main tasks you were involved in and roughly how long they took and how often?

Follow-up probes (to add detail, reconcile differences, or fill gaps):

- *Setup and preparation*
    - Reviewing or inputting on the communication campaign materials
    - Coordinating with other teams (e.g. communications, HR, inclusion)
    - Verifying or signing off final versions
    - Setting up the MS Form
    - Checking employee lists, and matching pseudonymised IDs to contact details
- *Delivery*
    - Setting up the initial emails and the two reminders on Power Automate
    - Preparing or uploading mailing lists
    - Sending the communications, including any difference in effort between the standard and behaviourally enhanced arms (e.g. personalisation)
    - Monitoring delivery (e.g. bounce-backs or failed sends)
- *Data*
    - Extracting diversity-disclosure responses from the MS Form

- Pseudonymising the data and preparing datasets for BIT

- *Other*
  - Responding to questions, feedback or clarifications from employees or colleagues
  - Any troubleshooting or unexpected issues

To close out delivery:

- Looking at what you've each recorded, is anything missing, or anything you'd revise having talked it through?
- Which tasks were done by one person versus shared across the team or other teams?
- Did setting up and sending the two arms differ in the time they took? If so, where did the difference come from?

c. Intervention development - adapting the materials for another organisation:
Separately, we'd like to understand what it would take for someone in a role like yours, *at a different organisation*, to adapt the materials produced for this trial - for example the email and reminder templates - to their own context. We're interested in the time to *adapt and reuse* what already exists, not the time it took to design these resources from scratch.

- Thinking about the templates and materials from this trial, if you were handed them at another organisation, what steps would you go through to adapt them for use there?
- Roughly how long would each of those steps take?
- What would make that quicker or slower - for instance, existing systems, sign-off processes, or the need to involve other teams?

Interview with Kier employees receiving the interventions

Section 1: Introduction and context setting (Anticipated duration: 3 minutes)

At the start of the interview, the BIT researcher will welcome the participant and thank them for taking part. The researcher will introduce themselves, BIT and BIT's collaboration

with Kier. They will also explain the purpose of the interview.

The researcher will then explain that participation is entirely voluntary and that the participant may pause or stop the interview at any stage. They will reassure the participant that all information shared will be kept confidential, that findings will be reported anonymously, and that the data collected will be used only for research purposes. The researcher will also clarify how the information may appear in outputs, such as through anonymised quotations.

The researcher will inform the participant that the interview will be recorded to ensure their views are captured accurately. Before switching on the recorder, the researcher will ask the participant for consent to record the conversation. Once the recording has begun, the researcher will ask again for verbal confirmation of their consent to take part.

Finally, the researcher will check whether the participant has any questions before moving on to the next section.

Interviewer note: *Sections 2 to 4 below rely on the participant remembering the email. If, at any point, it becomes clear that the participant has no recollection of receiving or reading the email, do not continue working through the recall-based questions in Sections 2, 3 and 4. Reassure the participant that this is completely fine and helpful to know in itself, and move directly to the "think-aloud" walkthrough in Section 5, where they will be shown the email and can react to it fresh. Questions about sharing or discussing the email (Section 4a) and about reactions to the email and form can then be picked up during or after the walkthrough.*

Section 2: Reactions to and comprehension of the communication campaigns (Anticipated duration: 7 minutes)

a. Introductory questions:

- Do you remember receiving any recent emails at Kier asking you to disclose your diversity information by completing an MS Form?
- Do you recall whether you completed the form with any information?
- Do you remember anything about who the email was from?
- Can you tell me whether you work mainly on-site or in the office?

b. Invitation to share communication: The researcher will ask the participant to search

their inbox for the email (researcher will give them the date the email was sent as well as the email address it was sent from) and forward it for the interview. If they cannot find it, the researcher will show it later in Section 5.

c. Initial impressions (RQ3a):

- Do you remember your first reaction when you noticed or opened the email?
- How did the email make you feel at the time?

b. Message comprehension (RQ3a): How clear did you find the email?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - What did you understand about why Kier collects diversity information?
    - What did you understand about how this information is used?
    - Was anything unclear, unexpected or confusing?

c. Mechanisms (RQ3a, RQ3b): Did the message change how you felt about disclosing your diversity data in any way?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - Did it help you understand why Kier is asking for this information?
    - Did it make you less worried about who would see your information or how it would be used?
    - Did it make disclosure feel more relevant or worthwhile to you personally?
    - Did the deadline make you feel you should act sooner rather than leave it?

Section 3: Factors shaping behaviour and response (Anticipated duration: 5 minutes)

a. Influences on behaviour (RQ3b, RQ4a, RQ4b): What made you decide to disclose (or not disclose) your diversity information?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
    - Having the time, or being too busy when the email arrived?

- How easy or hard it was to open and complete the MS Form?
- How comfortable you felt sharing this information?
- Other tasks taking priority?
- Whether the request felt relevant to you or your role?
- Not being sure what happens to the data after you submit it?

Section 4: Sharing, views on the communication campaigns and suggestions for improvement (Anticipated duration: 5 minutes)

a. Sharing and discussion (RQ1b): Did you talk about the email or the request to share diversity information with anyone else at Kier?

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
  - Did you mention it to, or discuss it with, colleagues or your manager?
  - Did anyone forward you the email, or did you forward it to anyone?

b. Tone, clarity and relevance (RQ4a, RQ4b):

- From memory, how did you find the tone and clarity of the email?
- Did the email feel relevant to you and your role?
- What do you remember about the sender of the email?

c. Unintended consequences (RQ3b, RQ4c): Do you remember if there was anything about the email that caused confusion, hesitation or irritation?

Section 5: "Think-aloud" walkthrough (Anticipated duration: 10 minutes)

a. Communication (RQ3a-b, RQ4a-c): The researcher shows the participant the exact email they received. The participant is then asked to talk through their reactions and reasoning as they re-read it.

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
  - What stands out most strongly?
  - What, if anything, in this email encouraged or discouraged you from

disclosing your diversity information?

- Any parts you ignored, misunderstood or found helpful?

- Did any wording affect your trust, comfort or motivation?
- What, if anything, would make this email more helpful or motivating?
  - Different wording or framing?
  - Different sender?
  - More explanation about what happens to the data?

- Time permitting, repeat with one, or both of the reminders
  - Prompt:
    - What are your thoughts on receiving reminders for ongoing Kier initiatives?
    - How do you feel about the tone and clarity of the reminder(s)?

b. MS Forms (RQ3b, RQ4a-c): The researcher shows the participant the MS Forms pathway (the link in the email → the MS Form → the questions, step by step → the submission/confirmation screen). The participant is then asked to talk through how they would navigate it (or how they did previously).

- **Potential prompts (if needed):**
  - What did you expect to see when you clicked the link in the email?
  - Which parts of the form felt easy or intuitive?
  - Which parts felt confusing, long or inconvenient?
  - Did anything about the form put you off sharing your information?
  - Did filling in an MS Form feel unusual or unexpected in any way?
  - Did being asked to provide information you thought Kier might already hold affect whether you filled it in?
  - If you opened the form but didn't share your information, what made

you stop?

- If you didn't open the form at all, what would have made you more likely to click the link and complete it?