

Making research participation more inclusive and relevant to need

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1. Introduction

Our Hertfordshire and West Essex communities are richly diverse, encompassing a broad range of cultures, experiences, and healthcare needs. However, current research and evidence does not adequately address all residents' needs. To address this, NHS England provided research engagement funding to Integrated Care Boards.

In Hertfordshire and West Essex, this funding was used to review the research pathway from funding to delivery, revealing that the system is not designed for inclusive research. We have developed strategies to develop the system to better meet the diversity of our population.

To understand perceptions, barriers, and enablers of research engagement, the Research and Innovation Hub conducted workshops with students at the University of Hertfordshire, providing valuable insights for enhancing research inclusivity.

This poster describes our approach to developing trust and increasing accessibility to research opportunities through partnership working.

2. Methodology

The Hertfordshire and West Essex Integrated Care Services (HWE ICS) commissioned the Research and Innovation Hub (RIH) at the University of Hertfordshire (UH) to deliver research engagement activities with students through three activities:

Student Advisory Sessions (n=48)

Research Engagement Workshops (n=126)

Student Focus Groups (Target n=10)



3. Themes from research engagement workshops based on feedback from 126 students

Ethnic Distribution of Research Engagement Workshop Participants

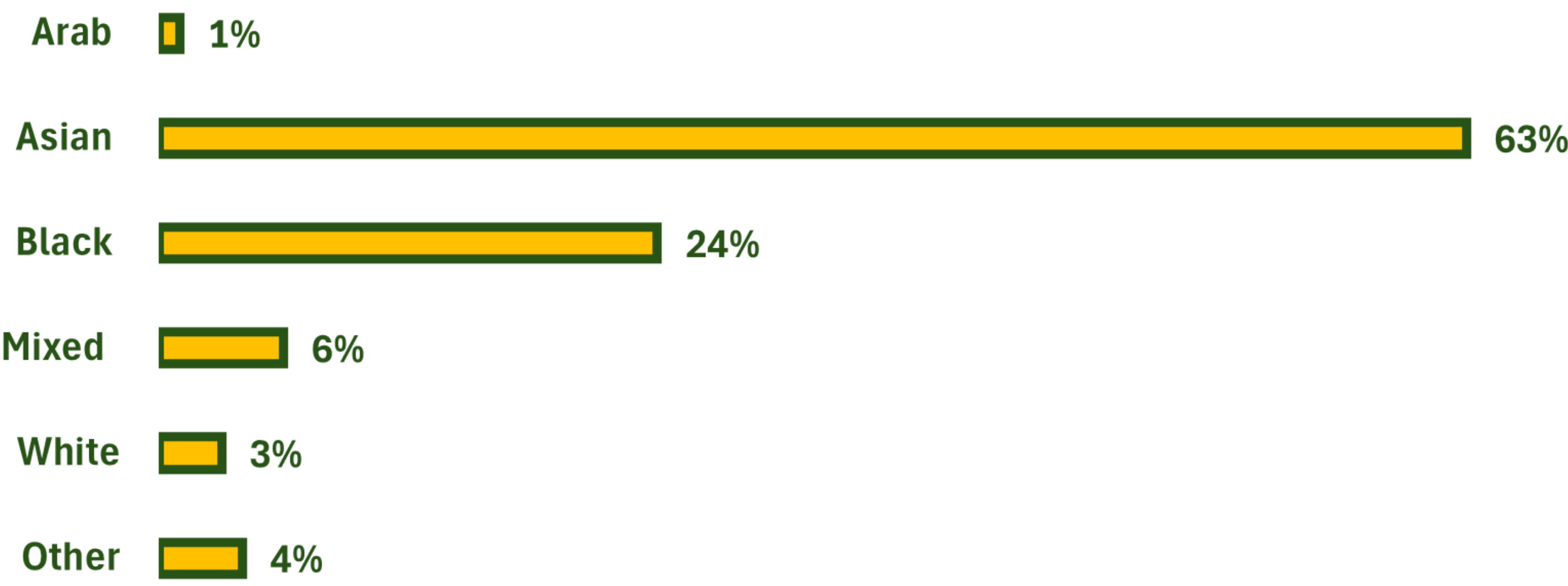


Figure 1: Distribution of Ethnic Groups Among Participants in Research Engagement Workshops (n = 126). This figure illustrates the percentage representation of various ethnic groups among the students who participated in the workshops.

Distribution of Religious Groups Among Participants in Research Engagement Workshops

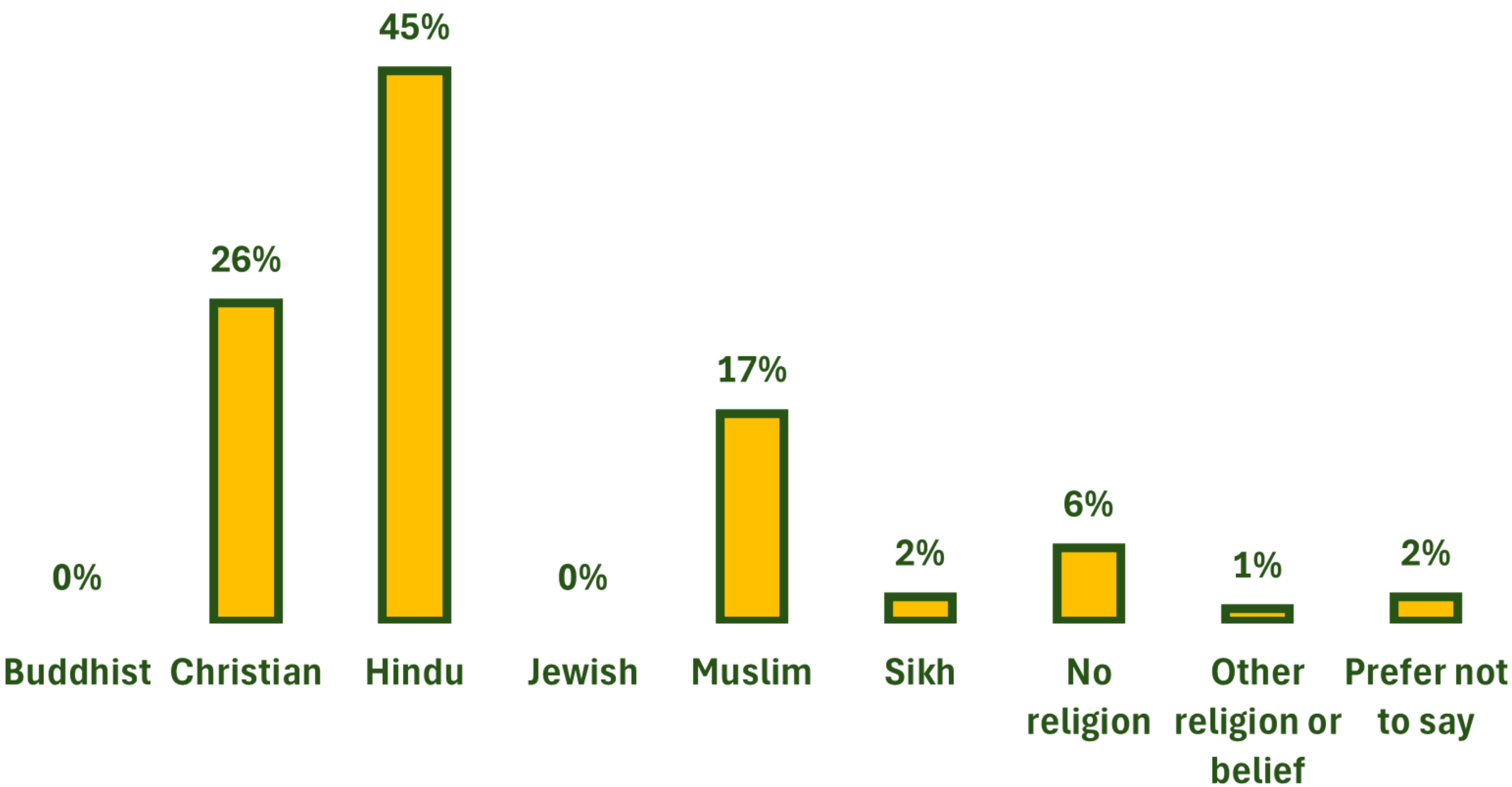


Figure 2: Distribution of Religious Groups Among Participants in Research Engagement Workshops (n = 126). The data highlights the diversity of the participants, showcasing the different religious backgrounds involved in the research engagement activities



Figure 5: Word Cloud of Students' Reasons for Not Participating in Research (n = 126). This word cloud visualises the various reasons students provided for not engaging in research activities.

Percentage Breakdown of Student Responses: Research Experience, Health Research Opportunities, and Interest



Have not participated in health research



Have not been offered the opportunity to participate in health research



Would like to be offered the opportunity to take part in health research

Figure 3: Percentage Breakdown of Student Responses to Research Experience and Health Research Participation Questions (n = 126). This figure illustrates the percentage distribution of student responses to three key questions: (1) Which statement best describes your research experience? (2) Have you ever been offered the opportunity to take part in health research? (3) Would you like to be offered the opportunity to take part in health research? The data provides insights into students' research backgrounds, previous opportunities, and interest in future health research participation.

Factors Encouraging Participation in Health Research: Student Responses



Figure 4: Responses to the Question: 'What Would Most Encourage You to Take Part in Health Research?' (n = 126). This figure presents the various factors that students identified as key motivators for their participation in health research

4. Our Learning

Our research engagement activities provided valuable insights into fostering an inclusive research culture that embraces diversity. We identified barriers such as awareness, perceptions, and attitudes that hinder engagement. Effective partnerships between the HWE ICS and UH can improve research inclusivity, visibility, and delivery through a system and people-oriented approach.

We share our insights and learning to help others enhance research engagement and promote more inclusive research, aiming to make a more meaningful impact for everyone.

Contact the Research and Innovation Hub: RIH@herts.ac.uk