Sir/Madam,

I am pleased to send a copy of *Changing What Counts: The Value of Free-Text Diversity Monitoring* to be considered for publication in your journal.

This is an original research paper, based on an empirical research study and grounded in research literature from relevant areas in the study of diversity and inclusion.

The main contribution of the work is to indicate the advantages of using a free-text methodology when gathering information about human diversity in organisations and communities, instead of using the standard methodology used in most contexts. Those advantages include an improvement in the quality of the data gathered, additional practical benefits for organisations resulting from qualitative data sets, and improving participant experiences, which ensure greater inclusivity and better engagement. These advantages are demonstrated using the findings of this original research and are contrasted with standard monitoring methodologies, using information from research in organisational studies and broader social sciences literature.

The paper begins by examining the standard method for diversity monitoring and identifying the large number of reasons why that method can limit the quality of data gathered and impact negatively both on an inclusion agenda and on attempts to harness the benefits of diversity. It moves on to describe the free-text method, the rationale for using it, and the considerations employed in its design. The data collection and analysis methods, and the size and scope of the research exercise are explained. Following this, the main findings are set out under the headings of quality, utility and participant engagement and experience. The article summarises the advantages of the free-text method for work relating to equality, diversity and inclusion which emerge from the research. It indicates some of the limits of the research and also points to areas where further study would be helpful in continuing to explore the best methods for diversity monitoring in a range of organisational contexts.

I hope that this work is of interest, and look forward to hearing from you in due course.

With best wishes,

Christopher Stephens.