Empowerment through Diversity and Inclusion

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- Using Grants to Broaden the Conversation on Diversity
- The Face of Leadership

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Empowerment Through Diversity & Inclusion

ON THE COVER: There is comfort in sameness. How often do we hear (or say), “we’ve always done it this way” and everyone nods and agrees that to change might be disruptive or we look around the office and only see people who all look the same? These last months have once again shown us that we can’t keep doing things the same way, that we need to embrace ideas, experiences and people who are different. We must make an effort to not close ourselves off in comfortable sameness.

NCURA has made it clear that we will work…day after day…to grow a more inclusive and diverse organization and profession. That declaration didn’t come recently nor did the timely theme for this issue of NCURA Magazine which had been in planning for more than a year. In this issue we have a wide range of articles addressing D&I in our profession and our institutions and that truly speak to “Empowerment through Diversity and Inclusion.”

Laneika Musalini, chair of NCURA’s Diversity and Inclusion Task Force, offers an overview of efforts at the regional levels and reminds us of things to think about that we might overlook in D&I efforts. Some of our regular features also focus on D&I this issue——“Spotlight on Research” presents Seattle University’s NSF ADVANCE that seeks to recognize and reward hidden faculty work; “Work Smart” offers some suggestions in “Striving for Inclusion in Remote Work.” Another regular feature, “Training Tips” has some practical suggestions for incorporating D&I into our learning platforms.

We all know that D&I conversations can be challenging ones to have but “Perhaps We Should Have a Conversation about Racial Disparity in Research Administration,” “The Face of Leadership,” and “The Hidden Diversity,” as well as other articles, all offer useful suggestions about having those difficult conversations.

The issue is packed with interesting, challenging and hopeful information. If you didn’t get the chance to see Judy Fredenberg’s acceptance of the 2020 Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration Award at the Annual Meeting, please take a minute to read it now. I leave you with her closing: “We’re adjourned. Work hard. Be nice. Have fun.”

Toni Shaklee, PhD, CRA, CPA, is senior editor for NCURA Magazine. She serves as Assistant Vice President for Research at Oklahoma State University. Toni is a peer reviewer for NCURA, is a member of the global traveling faculty, and serves on the NC&LD. She can be reached at toni.shaklee@okstate.edu
It is the start of autumn and we are continuing our journey into the fall semester amidst COVID adjustments, economic concerns, and uncertainties and stresses from our social and political climate. I draw strength knowing NCURA is committed to empowering us—the membership—by focusing on new ways to create transparency, enhance opportunities, and build spaces for authentic dialogue and conversations. Our commitment to diversity and inclusion statement reads:

The National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) recognizes, values, and celebrates diversity of persons, skills, and experiences in its mission to advance the profession of research administration. Thus, NCURA is committed to building and maintaining a diverse membership and a culture of inclusion. Every member of NCURA has a right, without regard to gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, social class, sexual orientation, ability, personality, functional experience, or background, to fair and respectful treatment, equal access to resources to support professional growth, and equitable opportunities to contribute to NCURA’s success.

NCURA’s Diversity and Inclusion Task Force was initiated with a Presidential Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion in 2017. Since 2017 the Task Force has been engaged in a multitude of efforts including the Diversity and Inclusion Collaborate Community, the regular “Inclusion Initiatives” column in this magazine, a climate survey, as well as a webinar.

As we continue to learn, share and network we will build innovative responses and solutions to respectfully support our research administration community. NCURA’s commitment to diversity and inclusion focuses on actions supporting systemic change to develop awareness and engagement.

NCURA’s Diversity and Inclusion Task Force was initiated with a Presidential Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion in 2017.

In this issue of the magazine, Empowerment through Diversity and Inclusion, our members generously share their experiences and knowledge so we can make an impact on our communities and profession and become part of the larger solution that must address social justice. This shared knowledge and viewpoints will help us make meaningful contributions through actions, partnerships, and reach our fullest potential. As NCURA members we can model the way forward, and make an impact through our contributions. It is a time for personal pride in our contributions to the research enterprise.

I send my best wishes to you and yours.

With Kind Regards,

Denise Wallen

Denise Wallen is the 2020 NCURA President and serves as Research Officer, Center for Collaborative Research & Community Engagement/Research Assistant Professor, Language, Literacy & Sociocultural Studies in the College of Education at the University of New Mexico. She can be reached at wallen@unm.edu
Over the past few months, the consciousness around and allyship for the Black Lives Matter and the racial justice movement have caused companies and institutions to reevaluate how diverse and inclusive their policies, branding, and workforce or teams really are. The evaluation related to diversity, equity, and inclusion is also critical in the area of research compliance. While partaking in the knowledge and learning offered via training, workshops, movies, books, social media, and podcasts is a great starting point, there is much more work to do, both policy-wise and employee-wise, in order to trigger a true transformation around diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in institutions and American society in general.

There is a belief that simply making companies or institutions more diverse will help advance DEI in the workplace. That concept is true to a certain extent. Research shows that diverse workforces or teams do perform better when they can understand and work within multiple perspectives and make better decisions that accurately reflect the global society we live in. However, while becoming a more diverse workplace is a noble aim, that alone will not advance the concepts of DEI or change the status quo around race relations within the workplace. In order for true change to occur, work must be done to change policies and traditions that make real transformation possible. And in conjunction with those changes, there must also be a concerted effort to create and nurture an environment that embraces the principles of equity and inclusion.
Like many other professions, research administration especially research compliance, can be myopic with respect to DEI in the workforce and established practices. So, what can be done to advance DEI within your office, unit, department, company, or institution? The key to advancement is to start small. Do not let the immense scope of things that need to be done keep you from doing anything at all. Leadership and employees can talk about the changes needed around DEI initiatives forever, but taking sustained and intentional action is the only way to create lasting change. Here are several steps to advance DEI within your sphere of influence.

Recruitment, Interviews, Hiring, and Onboarding

1. Create and Use Results-Oriented Job Descriptions – Research shows that men apply for a job when they meet 60% of the qualifications, while women only apply when they meet 100% of them. To alter this dynamic, switch job descriptions from being based on a checklist of skills, to focusing on expected achievements within the position. This will allow more females and people of color to make it into the interview process (Mohr, 2018).

2. Utilize Blind Resume Screenings – According to Francis (n.d.), applicants with “ethnic” sounding names have trouble getting callbacks, and those with female names are often rated lower than those with male names when all other things are equal. Using a blinding process in the resume screening will minimize unconscious or implicit biases.

3. Ban the Notion of “Culture Fit” and “Gut Feeling” – When interview committees want to deny progressing candidates further into the interview process around the notion of “culture fit” or “gut feeling,” it is often a sign that unconscious or implicit bias is at play. Require a more specific explanation from the committee. This allows leadership to uncover hidden biases and have honest conversations around them (Reilly, n.d.).

4. Introduce Your DEI Beliefs and Priorities Early – Communicate why you care about DEI issues, explain how you define them, and familiarize the search committee with your priorities around those issues.

Marketing and Branding

5. Showcase Your Commitment to DEI Publicly – Whether it’s on the landing page of your website, your marketing or branding materials, or on your job/careers page; a simple sentence outlining your DEI commitment will send a strong message to all the people who interact with you.

Professional Development

6. Have Everyone Take an Implicit Association Test – Tools and tests may help employees realize their own biases. Follow the assessment with several conversations about the results to process the information and acknowledge that we all have biases, and that it is okay. This is often one of the most important steps to initiating deeper and more impactful DEI conversations (Huppert, 2017).

7. Invite DEI Experts and Speakers to Conduct Training and Facilitate Conversations – Have content experts speak at meetings, workshops, and training about DEI issues. This will provide in-depth development opportunities that can transform your company or institutional culture. These speakers are adept at and trained to facilitate discussions around these issues which can often be difficult and uncomfortable. Conducting DEI training with little to no experience can cause more harm than good. Rely on the experts.

Office Environment

8. Foster a Culture Where Every Voice Is Welcome, Heard, and Respected – Often times when employees quit, it is because they feel that they are unable to be their true authentic self and their uniqueness is not appreciated or valued. With that in mind, it is vital that leadership works to create an environment where all employees feel a sense of connectedness and belonging to the company or institution and their fellow peers (Somen, 2017).

Change will not happen overnight as this is a continual process that requires intentionality and a complete team focus. It is critical that DEI successes are celebrated and showcased so that the workforce understands that a focus on these issues manifests into positive progress for the company or institution. In conclusion, set a plan that works for you and your workplace. You can utilize the steps above to begin the change process but above all else, listen to your employees. ALL OF THEM! Intentionally promote and discuss the things they care about and you’ll be giving yourself one of the biggest competitive workplace advantages that all companies or institutions strive toward: HAPPY AND PRODUCTIVE EMPLOYEES.

Leadership and employees can talk about the changes needed around DEI initiatives forever, but taking sustained and intentional action is the only way to create lasting change.

References

Dr. Allen Sutton currently serves as the Executive Director for the Office of Outreach and Education at Washington State University. For 16 years, Dr. Sutton has provided hands-on guidance to multiple institutional communities to help them navigate and integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion concepts and promising practices into a higher education context. Further, Dr. Sutton’s primary focus has been on defining and strategically aligning diversity, equity, and inclusion at his institution, developing cultural competence skills in students, faculty and staff, and advocating for expanded and equitable access to marginalized populations through interactive workshops/trainings, retreats, and other high impact practice activities. He is a member of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc., the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA), and the American College Personnel Association (ACPA). He can be reached at allen.sutton@wsu.edu
The conversation on diversity is a continuous journey that requires endless teaching and learning about other groups and their unique experiences and characteristics. Grant-funded programs offer opportunities to explore and educate on the importance of diversity and inclusion. The role of a sponsored research administrator to seek and implement transformative funding programs to promote and advance diversity allows the university community to make a difference. An institution’s grant project can serve unique and diverse populations, from university students to K-12 students, educators, and other populations in the greater community.

To address the unique and diverse populations in the northern region of Georgia, the University of North Georgia (UNG) applied, in 2015, to the U.S. Department of Education’s Office of Migrant Education for a College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) grant. The CAMP project perfectly aligned with the university’s mission and vision statements to reflect diversity and inclusion. Once UNG received its first five-year federally funded competitive CAMP grant, it was crucial for the Grants and Contracts Administration team to successfully implement the CAMP program. The outreach and training took planning and involved several steps. It started with an initial kickoff meeting, which included staff from Human Resources, Business and Finance, Admissions, Financial Aid, Student Affairs, and the Compliance Office. Following these meetings, there were individual department meetings with Academic Advisement, Career Services, Multicultural Student Affairs, Travel, Counseling, Tutoring, and Residence Life. At each meeting, a member of Grants and Contracts Administration was present to discuss the goals of the grant and interpret the many intricacies related to ensuring compliance, deliverables, and outcomes. Having constant conversations about CAMP helped break down uncertainties and stereotypes. It offered awareness of how grant-funded programs for first-generation and under-represented students make a difference. In these meetings, we expressed how valuable each campus member is to the grant and how they are instrumental in providing the resources to support students with their educational endeavors and their transition during their first year of college. We explained how we are all essential to assuring the CAMP students’ undergraduate success, and as a university, we are a voice for the betterment of students.
Sponsored Research Administration at UNG operates in an environment of collaboration and cohesiveness with many essential campus departments. Stewarding and managing grants takes a team of experienced people, and there are always conversations on how best to manage external funding. Establishing relationships within an institution around grant-funded projects allows for broadening the conversation on diversity. Therefore, why not incorporate discussions on diversity and inclusion using grant-funded programs as a platform? These conversations help dispel stereotypes and teach lessons on respect and acceptance for one another. While grant-funded programs that support diverse populations can only be successful with a university’s commitment, the programs can help advance the organizational culture change around diversity at the institution.

UNG is leading these grant initiatives and empowering the campus community to be innovative and creative to support a diverse group of faculty, staff, and students. The support from our senior leaders and UNG’s Summer Food Service Program, which serves meals to food insecure K-12 students during the summer, UNG Grants and Contracts staff visited project sites and experienced first-hand that the children and families at each site had unique needs. These site visits prepared the staff to explore additional funding opportunities to support the program. Understanding the diverse populations and their characteristics can better prepare research administrators to assess their institution’s capacity to serve diverse populations and provide optimal service to faculty and staff.

Communication and training are vital to the success of implementing and stewarding grants. Incorporating the set values, goals, and objectives of the grant-funded programs and creating a closer relationship with faculty, administrators, and staff is essential to supporting these programs. Attending webinars, workshops, conferences, and virtual conferences is always encouraged to increase knowledge on diversity. When conducting training, discuss the significance of diversity and how valuable faculty, staff, and members of other departments from the campus community are to the success of the grant. Let them know how important they are to implementing the program, and how they are changing peoples’ lives. Our faculty and staff are instrumental in improving the conditions for a diverse student population and the greater community the institution serves. Celebrate success! Let everyone know about the accomplishments of grant-funded project participants. Promote success stories, updates, and milestones. Invite faculty and staff to recognition events. Sharing success stories will enable them to learn about the participants, and involvement in recognition programs will offer an opportunity to connect human faces to groups that may otherwise exist, to some, only on paper. At the end of every academic year or summer program, there is a celebration and recognition ceremony for the CAMP, Migrant Education-High School Equivalency Program (HEP), Upward Bound Program in Gilmore County, and Johnson High School Upward Bound, and Ronald E. McNair Postbac-calaureate Achievement Program. In attendance at these events are our university’s senior leaders, faculty, and staff. During the program, members of the audience hear students’ and parents’ experiences, meet community leaders who are collaborating and supporting these projects, and learn the personal stories of the faculty and staff who are also engaged in these projects. The stories are welcoming and establish a rapport with our students. Diversity is essential to the institution, its students, and the campus community. Diverse grant-funded programs are an excellent opportunity to provide students with access to academic innovations, engagement, and strategies to contribute to the overall success of their education. Continuously training and educating the campus community on the populations supported by grants strengthens the sponsored research team, faculty, and everyone involved in managing grant-funded projects, ensuring positive outcomes. These practices will allow research administrators to contribute to producing a more diverse and inclusive institution.

“Understanding your institution’s priorities can provide avenues for education on matters of diversity.”

Comptroller, Business and Finance, and Budget offices has made it possible to facilitate grant-funded projects. Collaborating with these essential departments was essential to implementing the CAMP grant. The success of the CAMP grant was evident in our students’ accomplishments, and UNG received several TRIO awards and its second CAMP grant on July 1, 2020. Our training and meetings offered awareness of how grant-funded programs for first-generation and underrepresented students make a difference. In these meetings, we voiced how valuable faculty and staff are to the success of the grant.

Understanding your institution’s priorities can provide avenues for education on matters of diversity. Exploring your resources and developing effective and efficient team relationships will build on the conversation of diversity. It is essential to know if your institution’s mission, facilities, resources, and culture align with strategically planning for and implementing grant-funded programs that will serve diverse student and community populations. Seeking grant opportunities that target different underrepresented groups is crucial. Exploring and understanding your institution’s, faculty’s, and campus community’s expectations is critical to the success of your grants that expand your institution’s mission on diversity.

Get out from behind the computer! Attend project-specific conferences and proposal writing workshops. Shadow project directors and staff. Sit in on project meetings and attend project events to become knowledgeable on the characteristics, needs, and goals of the diverse populations your grant-funded projects serve. To better prepare for assisting with the writing of the proposal to renew UNG’s CAMP grant for another five years, a UNG pre-award staff member attended the National HEP/CAMP Association conference with program staff. This conference exposed the staff member to the background and unique challenges of the population served by HEP and CAMP, which could not be fully understood by reading reports. For Lourdes Bastas, MA, Associate Director of Post Award for Grants and Contracts at the University of North Georgia, serves as the key resource to principal investigators in all matters related to the University and sponsor policies for post award activities regarding good management practices and ensuring proposals and awards are in compliance with the university internal policies and funding agency’s regulations. She can be reached at lourdes.bastas@ung.edu

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As employees delay retirement and stay in the workplace longer, age differences—and differences in life experience—between older and younger members of the workforce continue to grow. As research administrators who largely work on college campuses, this is especially pronounced since we encounter new cohorts of college students each year. When many people look at differences between generations in the workplace, they see a source of conflict. Our goal is to flip the script and look at how to use these differences in a positive way to build teams that capitalize on the strengths of each generation.

In 2020, representatives from five generations make up our workplace: the Silent Generation (1928-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), Millennials (1981-1996), and Generation Z (1997-2012). For the purposes of this article, we’re focusing on Baby Boomers, Generation X, and Millennials since they make up the largest part of the workforce.

Compared to many careers, research administration is a field in its infancy. Very few research administrators who consider themselves part of the Baby Boomer generation started their career in the field. Baby Boomers learned on the job, creating the framework for the field and developing research administration from a job into a career through their hard work and dedication. Many started as administrative assistants shipping reams of paper that comprised grant proposals to funding agencies, hoping they would arrive by the deadline. This is a very different experience from younger generations, in this case Generation X and Millennials, who came into a fully formed field, complete with official job titles, educational requirements, and sometimes even structured career ladders.

In addition to on-the-job training, younger research administrators learn their roles through training sessions and workshops, often led by their Baby Boomer colleagues.

It can be tough for Baby Boomers to watch their younger colleagues move up the career ladder quickly, even though they have less on-the-job experience, but one of the most important things to remember in this situation is that each generation is in a different stage in their career. While Millennials may not be searching for their first job, many are still grappling with early career challenges, including proving themselves to their colleagues, becoming more confident in their abilities, and experimenting with the relationship between risk and reward in their careers. While many Millennials may not have grown up wanting to be research administrators, many have spent all or most of their careers in the field. Millennials are often viewed as more competitive in the work environment because they seek promotions or other opportunities for career advancement. This contributes to the myth that Millennials can be entitled or expect promotion without having adequate experience or evidence of successful performance. In reality, though, the early career period is a natural time for career growth, as Millennials learn the profession, gain certifications, and begin to specialize in a specific content area.

Older and more experienced, members of Generation X find themselves mid-career, where they start to face their first severe career dilemmas. At this stage, many people have more responsibilities outside of work, like caring for children or aging parents. While some may continue to improve their performance, others’
development may stall or begin to deteriorate. The dynamics of this career-stage have contributed to the myth that those in Generation X can be “burnt out” or “disengaged.”

Most Baby Boomers are in what is considered the late-career stage, which is sometimes described as a point when individuals are no longer learning. Obviously, in research administration, we know this is not the case! Many Baby Boomers have been in the field and even at their institutions for many years and have a great deal of learned, on-the-job experience to late-career stage, employees may face limited upward mobility or may be locked into their current job. They may look forward to become more protective of their positions and themselves and reinforce the importance of their education, experience, and other requirements for positions and compensation structures, these individuals may struggle with younger and less experienced colleagues moving quickly through the ranks or earning more for similar jobs.

Another age-related factor that impacts workplace dynamics are generational attitudes toward loyalty. We’ve already discussed the stereotype that Millennials aggressively pursue promotions, sometimes before others think they are ready. Baby Boomers came of age in a society where people often worked for one company for their entire careers. They received regular raises and promotions and often had stable options for retirement, like pensions. In return, Baby Boomers are very loyal to their employers. Generation X entered the workplace in the 1990s, in the middle of the dot-com boom and were well established in their careers by the time the great recession hit in 2007, but also saw companies strip away benefits and freeze salaries. Millennials, on the other hand, graduated from college during the recession, struggled to find employment, and often faced lower starting pay and fewer raises when they finally did find jobs. Millennials often move jobs multiple times to capitalize on increased salaries and the ability to gain different experiences. This behavior can be seen as disloyal by their Baby Boomer and Generation X coworkers, but the decision is rarely based on loyalty; but rather it is a response to instability in their early careers.

So how do we use this information to create a workplace that harnesses everyone’s strengths, minimizes everyone’s challenges, and unifies individual employees into a cohesive team? Begin by using someone’s generational identity as a starting point to find out how each person wants to be shown respect and appreciation and

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<th>Generation</th>
<th>Myths</th>
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<tr>
<td>Baby Boomers (1946-1964)</td>
<td>Aren’t innovative, don’t welcome change. Territorial, build silos. Slow to trust. Rigid, hierarchical – less likely to challenge people in authority. Tagline: “Because that’s the way we’ve always done it.”</td>
<td>Impatient when someone rebels against “the system,” frustrated with younger, less experienced people making more money – don’t feel respected or appreciated. Work-a-holics. Learned technology on the job, tech skills may not come as easily or quickly compared to Generation X or Millennials.</td>
<td>Loyalty, dedication. Strong sense of professionalism: decorum, business communication, business etiquette. Identification with profession: “I am a research administrator;” pride in their profession.</td>
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<td>Generation X (1965-1980)</td>
<td>Angsty, burned out, disengaged. Cynical and skeptical of change – have seen enough attempts at improvement that they don’t want to waste time if it isn’t going to work. Tagline: “I have a life.”</td>
<td>Ignored, lumped in with other groups. “Middle child syndrome.” Avoid conflict and confrontation, which can make them seem disengaged – don’t want to spend the emotional energy on conflict. Easily overloaded because there is no integration between home and work life.</td>
<td>Focused on results, keep heads down and get stuff done without needing constant praise. Tech savvy but can disengage. Differentiation between work and home life. Value work-life balance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Millennials (1981-1996)</td>
<td>Lazy and entitled, expect promotions without putting in the time to earn them. No loyalty to employers. Optimistic – think they can change the world. Tagline: “I’d like to talk to you about my future.”</td>
<td>Want praise, to feel like they are making an impact instead performing menial tasks. Little respect for traditional business norms – communications, dress code, etiquette. See education and experience as interchangeable.</td>
<td>Versatile, innovative, learn quickly/can pivot easily. Not afraid to upend processes and procedures. Digital natives. Willing to find a work situation that works for them – will not stay in a job where their needs are not being met. Integration of home and work life. Value/expect flexibility in the workplace – hours, working from home, work style.</td>
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to discover the strengths they can share with other team members. For research administrators, establishing a team that meets the needs of the researchers is our primary goal. To do this, identifying the strengths of each individual is key. First, identify the needs of your researchers and have an open discussion with your staff about the tasks that need to be done to meet those needs. Then, assess the strengths of your staff and decide how to divide the work so that each team member is responsible for what they do best.

For example, if the Baby Boomer on your team has been at your institution for most of their career, ask them about the history of policies and procedures on your campus. They have institutional knowledge and understanding of how policies and procedures have evolved to get you where you are today. Your Generation X employee, on the other hand, might prefer that you show respect for their autonomy and “get it done” attitude by not micromanaging their projects. Where Millennials may lack decades of on-the-job experience, they excel at seeing ways to make processes more efficient through use of technology. Pairing a Baby Boomer’s institutional knowledge with a Millennial’s eye for efficiency and a Generation X-er’s independent spirit can result in a powerful team that suggests informed changes to build on existing systems and anticipate problem areas in advance.

A team that recognizes the differences and strengths of each of their co-workers, treats each other with respect, and works collaboratively will always be stronger and provide excellent service to the researchers. As more Baby Boomers approach retirement, it is important to be sure the following generations are prepared to take over more responsibility to ensure our profession moves forward. The team who can work together and hand information and ideas from one generation to another will be the most successful.

References
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CONNECT THE DOTS
Sponsored Research Administration: A Guide to Effective Strategies and Recommended Practices

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In June 2020, NCURA launched an online salary survey, designed to collect salary information for specific research administration positions. Over 1,175 NCURA members contributed to the inaugural salary survey. The information collected in this salary survey has been aggregated and made available to NCURA’s members as a resource for selecting job titles, potential job families, and determining salaries based on years of experience, position type, institution type and geographic location.

Start using this tool - a benefit of your NCURA membership - today! www.ncura.edu
NCURA’s 62nd Annual Meeting (AM62), aptly themed *The Power of You*, was a history-making meeting. The content was offered virtually, in its entirety, beginning with 14 pre-conference workshops held on August 7th and 10th and over 150 concurrent sessions and discussion groups, August 11th through 14th. To support our international participants from all over the globe, sessions in the Global track were also hosted in Tokyo Time. Over 1800 individuals attended AM62, and for 30% of them, it was their first annual meeting. We represented 298 institutions, 51 U.S. states and territories, and 27 non-U.S. countries. This vast representation supports this month’s magazine theme, Empowerment through Diversity and Inclusion, and NCURA’s commitment to diversity and inclusion.

When the Program Committee began planning the meeting in December 2019, *The Power of You* recognized that we, as research administrators, have the power to inspire others, increase our success, and be a source of strength. It was intended to provide each of us a sense of controlling our own selves so we can positively impact others around us, as well as discover our greatness from within, understand and cultivate every aspect of our professional lives, and reach our fullest potential with confidence. This year brought unprecedented events that impacted the world, our institutions, and our members personally.
DAY 1 KICKED OFF JUST AS IT ALWAYS DOES WITH A KEYNOTE ADDRESS. THIS TIME, THE ADDRESS WAS VIRTUAL FROM AN NBC AWARD-WINNING JOURNALIST, WHO USED THE MEETING THEME, “THE POWER OF YOU;” TO REMIND US THAT NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT LIFE CURRENTLY IS DURING THIS PANDEMIC, WE WILL SURVIVE. AS SHE NOTED “WE ARE LIVING IN AN UNEXPECTED EXPERIMENT” AND BECAUSE OF THE POWER OF YOU, RESEARCH ADMINISTRATORS SUPPORTING RESEARCH AND THOSE WHO WILL FIND THE SOLUTION TO COVID-19, WE WILL COME THROUGH THIS AND BE STRONGER THAN EVER.

DAY 2 BEGAN WITH A SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER, DR. KELVIN DROEGEMEIER, DIRECTOR, WHITE HOUSE OFFICE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY, WHO ADDRESS ISSUES RELATED TO RESEARCH SECURITY AND INTEGRITY.
In addition, there were many guest speakers and surprises.

- The 2020 NCURA Executive Leadership Program Class welcomed everyone and shared their reflections on NCURA through our Core Values of Integrity, Excellence, Service, Collegiality, Transparency and Inclusiveness.
- There were 9 posters with “The Virtual Learner” by Tricia Callahan, Carrie Chesbro, Tolise Dailey, and Melanie Hebl winning the most votes.
- 300 unique presenters facilitated sessions, discussion groups, and follow-on chat rooms.
- Regions provided networking opportunities and fun ice-breakers such as virtual scavenger hunts following their business meetings.
- Music was provided each night by Soul Source, special guest singer Lillie Ryans-Culclager, Scott Niles, and Poor Man Gibson (aka Franc Lemire)
- Special guest appearances were provided prior to each session by Kimberly Pace, Paul Mecurio, Shari Harley, Reggie Brown and Dave Barry.

NCURA’S YEARLONG SPONSORS (CAYUSE, HURON, KUALI, DELOITTE, STREAMLYNE, BAKER TILLY, ATTAIN, AND JOHNS HOPKINS UNIVERSITY) AMONG OTHER ORGANIZATIONS PARTICIPATED IN OUR FIRST EVER VIRTUAL EXHIBIT HALL! THEY RELEASED NEW PRODUCTS, COVID-19 RESOURCES, E-BOOKS, AND WERE AVAILABLE FOR LIVE CHAT! AS A REMINDER, THE VENDOR INFORMATION IN THE VIRTUAL EXHIBIT HALL IS AVAILABLE THROUGH NOVEMBER 24TH.
NCURA President Denise Wallen and Vice President Rosemary Madnick co-hosted a virtual reception the week following AM62 to thank the Program Committee for an outstanding job on this historic meeting. The Reception was attended by the committee, along with Past Secretaries and Treasurers; Past Presidents; the 2020 NCURA Board of Directors; and, the 2020 NCURA Executive Committee.

AM62 Program Committee (pictured here) were happy that the program was successful and attended by over 1,800!
ATTENDEES OF THE VIRTUAL RECEPTION FOLLOWING AM62 SHARED FAVORITE MOMENTS

Thank you!

Heather Offhaus
Timothy Schailey
Shannon Sutton
Anne Albinak

Kris Monahan
Kerry Peluso
David Baker
Sandra Logue

Vicki Krell
David Richardson
Janice Anderson
Barbara Gray

Chris Hansen
Mario Medina
Kay Gilstrap
Kim Moreland

Denise Wallen
Barbara Cole
Kathleen Larmett
Jerry Fife

Katherine Kissmann
Robyn Remotigue
Sam Westcott
Michael Castilleja
We are deeply grateful for the tireless efforts of the NCURA staff that immediately sprang into action as the March PRA/FRA Conferences in Puerto Rico were ending and for our Program Committee members who were flexible, understanding and supportive during months of uncertainty. Additionally, our workshop faculty, session presenters, discussion group facilitators, and poster presenters were asked to do triple-duty: develop content early, make themselves available to pre-record sessions and then participate in Q&A during the live offering. The Power of You truly became The Power of Us as we supported one another through the year and will continue to do so as we face many challenges ahead of us...together.

AM62 Chair and NCURA Vice President

Rosemary
Rosemary Madnick
University of Alaska Fairbanks

AM62 Co-Chairs

Denise
Denise Moody
Boston VA Research Institute

Jennifer
Jennifer Rodis
University of Wisconsin-Madison
Identifying patterns of research success

We started by pulling data on current mid-career faculty members’ proposal and award activity over time in an effort to identify post-tenure trends.

MU ORED has worked closely with MU Division of IT to create an interface between our financial system, PeopleSoft, and our data warehouse. Having the data available in our data warehouse allows us to work with real-time data and provides a great deal of flexibility to create visualizations in a host of business intelligence tools, including Cognos Analytics, Microsoft Power BI, and Tableau; MU ORED’s tool of choice is Tableau. The visualizations we created allowed us to easily see that MU’s mid-career faculty tended to fall into one of three groups post-tenure:

• Early proposal successes with a taper off in proposal submissions over time.
• Unsuccessful proposal submissions overall, generally with a taper in volume over time.
• Sustained success post-tenure—continuing successful proposal submissions.

By Jamie L. Szabo

Focus Group Word Frequency:
The team at University of Missouri’s Office for Research and Economic Development conducted focus groups with three mid-career faculty cohorts, based on their success in securing grants and contracts. They used NVivo to conduct the qualitative data analysis, including this word cloud.

Research Analytics
How Data can be used to Develop and Support Researchers

What started as a faculty needs assessment has unearthed new directions for leaders at University of Missouri (MU) to pursue to provide support for their mid-career investigators, particularly women and investigators of color. Applying both quantitative and qualitative methods, MU’s research analytics team is helping to develop and support researchers.

Like many research institutions, the University of Missouri had a training program for faculty investigators and the research administrators who support them. Last year, the Mizzou Office of Research and Economic Development (ORED) surveyed faculty investigators to learn more about their needs. What emerged from the survey was a clear need for programming customized to the unique needs of mid-career faculty.

Over the next several months, MU ORED talked through how to meet this need. Knowing that we had a host of data and visualization tools available to us, we began to strategize how we could leverage data to identify our target audience and develop programming that would help support and grow our mid-career faculty.

Identifying patterns of research success
We started by pulling data on current mid-career faculty members’ proposal and award activity over time in an effort to identify post-tenure trends. MU ORED has worked closely with MU Division of IT to create an interface between our financial system, PeopleSoft, and our data warehouse. Having the data available in our data warehouse allows us to work with real-time data and provides a great deal of flexibility to create visualizations in a host of business intelligence tools, including Cognos Analytics, Microsoft Power BI, and Tableau; MU ORED’s tool of choice is Tableau. The visualizations we created allowed us to easily see that MU’s mid-career faculty tended to fall into one of three groups post-tenure:

• Early proposal successes with a taper off in proposal submissions over time.
• Unsuccessful proposal submissions overall, generally with a taper in volume over time.
• Sustained success post-tenure—continuing successful proposal submissions.
What could this data tell us? How could we use this information to find a way to support this group of faculty? For those faculty who had early successes, then seemed to submit fewer proposals over time, what caused their activity to slow? For the faculty who weren’t submitting successful proposals, were they discouraged and how could we help? For those who had sustained successes, what were their motivators? What were they doing differently?

Adding context to the numbers
The next step became clear—the quantitative data helped us uncover some helpful information, but to get to the heart of the issue, we needed to talk with faculty from each group to get answers to our questions. We decided to facilitate focus groups to see what we could learn. Looking at our proposal data, when faculty earned tenure, and the available funding in their respective disciplines—we grouped our faculty into three cohorts: those who have been highly successful in securing grants and contracts post tenure, those who have had limited success in securing grants and contracts post tenure, and those in the middle of the road.

We obtained approval from our IRB to facilitate focus groups and crafted questions for each group to help us understand their motivations, roadblocks, and research development needs. We reached out to faculty in each of our cohorts to gauge their willingness to participate in focus groups, and we had several enthusiastic participants. Amidst the pandemic, we conducted focus group meetings over Zoom, making it easy to record and transcribe the conversations afterwards.

For qualitative data analysis, we used NVIVO to identify the common themes that emerged from the focus group discussions. In parallel, we developed a Qualtrics survey for our Associate Deans for Research in each of our colleges and schools to provide their perspectives. The deans’ survey helped us learn about existing supports in the colleges for mid-career faculty, gaps that we need to fill, and barriers to applying for grants.

We also relied on MU faculty responses to the Collaborative on Academic Careers in Higher Education (COACHE) survey, an ongoing Harvard University study of faculty job satisfaction nationally. Our faculty were surveyed about their job satisfaction in 2013, 2016, and in 2019. Our mid-career faculty who responded to the COACHE survey in 2019 indicated reduced job satisfaction in the research space generally when compared to our 2013 and 2016 results. Additionally, women and faculty of color indicated lower job satisfaction than their white male counterparts. Through conversations with other institutions about their mid-career programming, we learned that this is quite common—in general, women and faculty of color feel greater pressure to engage in service activities and mentor junior faculty, often at the peril of their research portfolios.

Developing the Mid-Career Fellows Program
We took all of our qualitative data to develop our Mid-Career Research Development Fellows Program, which will provide research development opportunities to post-tenure/mid-career faculty prior to promotion to full Professor. Using InfoReady, we gathered applications from mid-career faculty across campus. The application was fairly simple—faculty
applicants provided their CV, a letter of support from their department chair, and a brief statement about why they wanted to participate in the program. A committee comprised of faculty from all disciplines and staff from our Division of Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity reviewed and scored the applications, identifying 13 fellows for our inaugural cohort. The cohort is comprised of faculty from all disciplines: health sciences, social/behavioral sciences, STEM, and the humanities.

As we developed our curriculum, we were mindful of the needs of the faculty, which were apparent from the qualitative data we gathered through the focus groups and surveys. Over the upcoming academic year, we will hold monthly meetings of our mid-career fellows.

"...the quantitative data helped us uncover some helpful information, but to get to the heart of the issue, we needed to talk with faculty from each group..."

Our first session was held in August 2020. In this session faculty began a self-assessment. In the following months, they will attend sessions on time management to find balance among research, teaching and service, how to become both an effective mentor and mentee concurrently, and how to revitalize a research portfolio. Early in the year, faculty will be provided with a profile, which is developed using data from Research Insights. Research Insights is an Academic Analytics subscription-based tool that incorporates grants data from the PeopleSoft Grants Module, self-reported data in our faculty evaluation tool, MyVita, along with the publically sourced data that is included in the Academic Analytics database. Research Insights allows for searches by faculty member and also research topic and provides suggested funding opportunities and potential collaborators. These data elements were used to develop the faculty profiles that our fellows can refer to as they go through the program.

Looking ahead
How will we gauge the successfulness of this program? Developing the profiles serves two purposes—the first is to give faculty a snapshot of their research activities to date at Mizzou along with suggested funding opportunities and collaborators, but they provide a benchmark for ORED to monitor the progress of the fellows in the years following the program. Are they submitting more and stronger proposals? Are they participating in more interdisciplinary collaborations? Are they seeking out funding opportunities and tools that they didn’t use prior to the program? Additionally, we will likely survey participants and request a retrospective reflective writing at the end of the program. The results of these as well as the productivity data we will glean from our various tools will help in developing future programming for Mizzou faculty.

Sample Profile Page 2: The second part of the profile prepared for the mid-career fellows cohort features traditional sponsored research metrics, including sponsor profile for proposals, proposal success rate, and proposal trends over time.

Jamie Szabo, MPA, has worked in research administration at Mizzou since 2008, in pre-award and post-award administration, and data analytics. As Director of Research Analytics, Jamie develops tools to inform decision making by institutional leaders using a variety of applications, utilizes data analysis to assist researchers in identifying potential collaborators and funding opportunities, and, as part of Mizzou’s Research Faculty, Resources, Support, and Training (Research FRST) initiative, implements professional development programs. Jamie can be reached at szaboj@missouri.edu
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Administering Equity Through Policy  
By Bonniejean Zitske

As campuses across the globe struggle to create inclusive and equitable environments for all, there is increased pressure in the United States on institutions of higher education to confront their own identities in order to create lasting and systemic change with regard to racial equality. True anti-racist work must be done at a policy level, and as research administrators, we have an opportunity to create legitimate change that touches the lives of students, researchers, participants, and others.

In the introduction of her book Becoming Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Gina Ann Garcia details the long, painful history of how institutions of higher education have become racialized entities in a field that sets standards and measures success based on white norms. On page 10 she writes, “The separation of white and Black colleges has consequences, with history proving that separate was never fully equal. Many of the land-grant institutions established with the first Morrill Act of 1862 were racialized as white while evolving into highly regarded, well-resourced research universities, including the University of Wisconsin–Madison, Michigan State University, and Purdue University. In contrast, the land-grant institutions that were established in 1890 were racialized as Black and have struggled for equitable resources, funding, faculty and infrastructures.”

Many of us work at large Research 1 institutions that are also land-grant institutions, established with the first Morrill Act, which have been predominantly white. Have we done the work to understand how the segregated history and targeted resources put us in a far better place to be competitive in today’s market? If so, do we feel a responsibility to work harder to provide a level playing field to those who have been marginalized and oppressed for as long as our institutions have existed? I do. And as a research administrator I feel poised to affect real change.

There are few positions that touch so many areas of campus. As the Assistant Director for Post-Award in a central office, I have developed relationships with the undergraduate students, the graduate school, human resources, financial aid, business services, office of diversity, facilities, police department, student unions, etc. In my role, I touch nearly every area of campus and as an administrator I have the opportunity to influence, create, interpret, and apply policy. Through policy we have the potential to produce serious change in campus culture by implementing policies that challenge the status quo and seek to advance equity and inclusion. Here are two financial examples.

Payments to human subjects. Policies around payments to human subjects often revolve around method or dollar amount. Many times, the question of cash payments comes up and university administrators wonder if this is a necessary option. Understandably, there are fiscal compliance concerns around the risks of handling cash. However, there are populations of people that do not have access to a bank account, nor a bank. It may be difficult to for them to make their way to a big-box store to use a gift card. The best way they can be compensated is indeed cold, hard cash. So rather than asking, do we really need to offer cash payments? Why not ask, how can we work to strengthen internal controls so cash payment, a necessity for many vulnerable populations, is not taken off of the table?

Payments to students. Students are another inherently vulnerable population with whom we work — especially students receiving financial aid and other compensation for their involvement in research projects. Usually there are many questions around how to properly pay students while remaining in compliance with employment law, financial aid requirements, and the unique terms and conditions of our sponsored projects. Rather than applying the policies without critical thought, in what ways can we center the student in our conversations and find creative ways to work within the restrictions to accommodate their needs?

In both of these examples, there is room for new institutional policies that work with external requirements to meet the needs of marginalized and vulnerable populations. For those in positions with the power to make decisions, are we doing so with an eye toward equity?

I challenge you, my fellow research administrator, to commit to learning about the long and tangled history of inequities in higher education and scholarly research. In doing so, I hope you find motivation to use your position to create change that will result in a better field for everyone.

Reference

Bonniejean Zitske (she/her/hers) has been a research administrator at UW-Madison for nearly 15 years, working in a department and dean’s office before taking on a leadership role in the central office. She is Past Chair of NCURA Region IV and currently serves on the NCURA Presidential Taskforce for Diversity and Inclusion. Bonniejean is currently working on a master’s degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis at UW-Madison. She can be reached at bzitske@rsp.wisc.edu
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Sickness Presenteeism in Research Administrators

By Jennifer Shambrook

If you had pneumonia during a major deadline, what would you most likely do?

This is the question that was posed to more than 600 research administrators in 2007, in the first iteration of the Research Administrators Stress Perception Survey (RASPerS). Thirty-five percent said they would work through the deadline and rest afterward. Twenty percent said they would work from home. Five percent said that they would work from home during the day and possibly come in at night. Taken together, 60 percent said they would work with pneumonia. Is this extreme dedication to work that should be lauded, or evidence of an extremely unhealthy workplace dynamic?

Reporting to work when sick is known as sickness presenteeism. Sickness presenteeism (SP) is a serious health concern, both for the individual and their co-workers. As we have been constantly reminded during the COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing is the most effective way to halt the spread of infectious disease. As many of us have learned through personal experience, one infected person coming to work during influenza season can cause a mini-epidemic in the work environment. Co-workers touching papers, copier buttons, door handles, elevator buttons, and other common touch items are exposed to the infectious disease that kills thousands of people worldwide each year.

Sickness presenteeism does not just negatively affect co-workers and potentially their families. It is also a predictor of more serious health issues in the future in the person who does not practice good self-care by resting and isolating while sick. Sickness presenteeism is associated with higher incidence of both physical health issues, like cardiovascular disease, and mental health issues, like depression. Sickness presenteeism also increases the likelihood of burnout. SP is strongly associated with longer term future absenteeism due to more serious illness, as overall physical and mental health declines from repeated poor self-care.

Unfortunately, as a group, research administrators are chronic repeat offenders when it comes to SP. Reporting to work while sick two or more times is considered problematic sickness behavior. Over 60% of research administrators surveyed in each of the 2010, 2015, and 2020 RASPerS indicated they had reported to work while sick two or more times in the past 12 months. It is encouraging to note that the 2020 RASPerS showed a sharp decline (63.3%) in those reporting two or more episodes of sickness presenteeism compared to the 2015 RASPerS (69.1%). Perhaps the calls for greater public health awareness have had a positive effect by lowering the incidence of SP behavior.

Why do people still report to work when they are sick?

Previous studies among other professional occupational groups have shown a variety of reasons for sickness presenteeism. These reasons include:

- Not wanting to burden their colleagues with their work;
- Not wanting to disappoint those to whom they provide a service;
- Feeling indispensable and that no one else can adequately carry out their specific responsibilities;
- Feeling they could “take it;”
- Not wanting to appear weak or lazy;
- Reluctance to use paid time off for monetary reasons;
- An unhealthy workplace culture that promotes pride in self-neglect for the sake of the work mission or dysfunctional competitive presenteeism.

Those who reported working more than 50 hours a week were more likely to also report sickness presenteeism in both research administrators and in previous studies of other occupational groups. Research administrators reporting high or extremely high stress were also associated with higher likelihood of reporting sickness presenteeism.

Does gender play a role in sickness presenteeism?

Previous studies of other occupational groups reported differences between binary gender groups in both prevalence of and reasons for sickness presenteeism. Women tended to display sickness presenteeism
more often than men. The reasons given for engaging in sickness presenteeism in women more frequently tended to be relational concerns about over-burdening colleagues or disappointing those to whom they provide a service. The reasons given for engaging in sickness presenteeism in men were more often feelings that they could handle the discomfort of the sickness, not wanting to appear weak or lazy, or financial concerns (lost sick days, wages, vulnerability for lay-off.)

Both male and female managers reported their reasons for SP were feeling indispensable and wanting to avoid the overload of work that would exist when they return to work. This is reinforced by data from the 2020 RASPerS, which found that over 90 percent of all research administrators reported that if they are absent for up to a week, more than half or virtually all of their work will be waiting for them when they return.

The 2020 RASPerS data was collected three months into the pandemic shutdown. The messaging to stay home if you are sick, to be considerate and protect your neighbors from your germs, is being widely broadcast. This underscores the notion that true concern for others is shown by staying home, rather than taking your sickness to work. This may explain why female research administrators reporting 0-1 days of sickness presenteeism increased significantly from 2015 levels. If we can continue that trend, that will be a positive lesson learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Further study will need to be done to understand why the converse is true among male research administrators. There was a significant uptick in male research administrators reporting going to work despite being sick. This is something that may need to be explored further in your own work environment if you detect this happening among your team.

Whether it’s in male or female or nonbinary workers, working while sick for any reason is problematic behavior that should be discouraged in the interest of the individual, the team, and their extended family and friends.

Recommendations
Make a commitment to yourself that you will not jeopardize your future good health by engaging in sickness presenteeism. Encourage your own teammates to take care of themselves by staying home when they are sick. If you are working remotely, that also means resting in bed if that is what you need to do to provide yourself with the best self-care. Do not endorse unhealthy behavior by giving laurels to those who work while sick. Show concern and show yourself to be a good example.

References


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"TRUE CONCERN FOR OTHERS IS SHOWN BY STAYING HOME, RATHER THAN TAKING YOUR SICKNESS TO WORK."
In July 2020, Emerald Publishing released its report: “The Power of Diverse Voices” (Emerald Publishing, 2020) which explored equality, diversity and inclusion in academia. The results stem from surveys among researchers globally and the general public in the United States and the United Kingdom. The results are an interesting read both when it comes to attitudes toward diversity and the role of publishing, and we highly recommend people read it. As openly gay men, it struck us that the top list of societal issues creating barriers for inclusivity did not include discrimination because of sexuality or sexual identity (The top concerns were: Ageism older, class, disability, gender, poverty, race, religion and unemployment). This is essential data, but perhaps it is only telling us the story of the types of diversity we consciously see around us or are culturally relevant in most societies. We don’t consider discrimination because of sexuality a problem if we do not see LGBTQ+ persons in our department. Not seeing different elements of diversity is problematic. In this article, we argue that it is vital to get a clear picture of the diversity within your department or research group, that a diversity policy is more than a token but has practical implications and we explore some ideas for what you can do next to enhance the diversity and inclusivity culture in your team or department.

Understanding your team
Many members of hidden minorities don’t feel comfortable expressing their identity if they feel uncomfortable within their teams. This can be compounded if they don’t feel like they are ‘seen’. Acknowledging the existence and validity of minority groups is incredibly important. Therefore, the first step to promoting diversity and inclusion is to be vocal about your approach and support diversity and inclusive environments. This doesn’t apply only at an organizational level through policies and strategies; because as crucial as they are, if I’m a closeted gay man, policies and strategies will not comfort me that my nearest colleagues, managers, collaborators, or researchers will support me coming out. If you are at the stage of your life where you hide your characteristics and identity, chances are you have done so for a long time, because of things that have happened to you in the past and your trust in people has broken down. This is often referred to as “straight acting” by members of the LGBTQ+ community. Imagine the toll it would take on you if you could never talk with your colleagues about your weekends or holidays because of your sexuality, or about your parents or the church you go to because you’re embarrassed about your social class, background, or religion. You would probably either isolate, be quiet, or develop an intricate story to protect yourself. You would never be yourself, and you might laugh along at inappropriate and offensive jokes even if it tore you apart on the inside. You could never add your unique perspective to the office or wider societal challenges, even if you knew what others said was wrong, as you would risk being outed.

How many talented people have we scared away from research or research management because of this? And how many researchers and research managers are hiding part of their identity, and do we honestly believe that they perform at their best? It is widely accepted that if you are not able to be your authentic self at work, not only your performance suffers but the quality of the work and innovation of your wider team suffers too.

That is why diversity is a topic for everybody. We need to talk about it and make it clear that everybody is safe to be themselves because you never know how diverse your team is. Talk about diversity, make it normal and make yourself vulnerable as a team leader. Be prepared to open up the conversations you have. You want your team to be able to support researchers, manage grants, or undertake the best research they can.

Practical implications
Good intentions, policies and strategies are a good starting point, but diversity has practical implications, especially in the world of research that is based on international collaboration and where we recruit people globally. Being LGBTQ+ is not accepted everywhere. Quite the contrary; in many countries, it is not only culturally taboo, but it can also be illegal and sometimes punishable by death. Yet, we recruit people from these countries and expect everything to work out smoothly when they come to the United States, Canada, or other liberal countries. It is important to say that often it does play out fine as individuals cannot be reduced to their national culture. We will not always know people’s perspectives on these matters just by knowing their religion or cultural background. Still, if we want to recruit from all over the world and have inclusive universities for all minority groups, we need to have structures, processes, and approaches in place to address any issues that might arise.

We also need to consider this when planning for international travel.
LGBTQ+ employees cannot travel everywhere safely, and it is crucial to identify who can advise them on this alongside making sure that your institutional policies and procedures are tailored to all travelers. With greater diversity comes even greater responsibility, and if universities are serious about this, they must take that responsibility upon themselves. If I’m part of a research project that is collaborating with a university in a country where there is a death penalty for being gay, should I take off my wedding ring or go back into the closet when part of this partnership? Or, perhaps it is safe for LGBTQ+ foreigners to go there, or maybe I should simply stay at home? How can I be sure there will be no negative consequences for my career should I choose not to travel? Some LGBTQ+ persons can easily hide their sexuality, but this is not the case for everybody. Even for those who can outwardly hide their sexual identity, problems can arise when traveling through customs where, essential hormonal medicine as a trans person or HIV medication may be discovered, potentially outing you. Who will help you in that situation?

This topic, however, is not only for LGBTQ+ persons. Everybody involved must be aware of these challenges; otherwise, a colleague can unintentionally out a gay colleague, for example, by referring to their same-sex partner at a social gathering. If this were to happen in a country like Saudi Arabia, it could put their colleague’s life or liberty at risk. That is why diversity is a concern for us all, why we need to involve everybody, and speak openly and frankly about these topics.

Next steps
So, what do you do then? Clearly, policies and strategies have a role to play. It is important for management to show their intentions, to show that they are behind this and are supportive. Policies and strategies should be in place and preferably presented and led from the highest level. They also need to be understood by all staff, giving everyone confidence in the policies and strategies.

The next step is to analyze whether you have the organizational setup and procedures to support your intentions. As the examples with LGBTQ+ employees and travel show it can have very practical implications. Remember that there are plenty of resources available to support effective policies, so do not leave it to minority representatives to create these procedures, programs, etc. They should be included in the work, but don’t just add the extra work on groups who are often already struggling.

There are several simple practical things you can do to help make your team be as inclusive as possible. If you have an international workforce at your university and you celebrate the religious holidays of the majority culture, you could also mark celebratory events that are important to other religious and/or cultural minorities. Other days to mark and use actively in your work with diversity could be the United Nations International Day against Racism, the UN International Day of Persons with Disabilities, and national/local LGBTQ+ Pride events etc.

We also recommend you create mentoring programs for minority people. For researchers and research managers at the beginning of their careers.
careers work can be difficult enough, but also struggling to figure out how to fit in and make your diversity a strength is an extra challenge. Having a role model or coach you can talk to and who understands what you are going through will be of great help.

Today, many universities have networks for LGBTQ+ students and staff. If you don’t already have that, consider supporting the creation of one. Even better, add a gay-straight alliance dimension. That will underline that we’re all in this together and we support each other no matter anyone’s background. These networks can, of course, be extended to other minority groups. A common objection often is that these groups single out minority groups instead of including them as a part of the majority. But equality isn’t about treating everybody the same and pretending there are no differences. These networks offer recognition of the fact that changing practices and behaviors can take time and that these groups can benefit from the support of each other and everybody else to navigate a world where they stand out.

Another excellent principle is to follow the money. External funding plays an increasingly important role in universities, not only financially but more broadly as it affects whom we hire, whom we collaborate with and which parts of society we wish to impact. That is why we think that tools for working with diversity and internationalization should be at the core of project management both in research and research management, in order to enable everybody to perform at their best, to attract the greatest talent, represent society, and challenge ourselves to conduct even better research. As shown above, this is not an easy task, and it will require the development of new core skills including communication, leadership, running meetings and recruitment procedures. Undertaking annual equality training across your team can support the embedding of good practice as well as educating all staff, creating more inclusive environments.

The challenges concerning diversity are manifold, especially as several dimensions of it are hidden. We don’t always know how diverse our surroundings are, and we will not know until we learn to communicate openly and clearly about it and then translate our intentions into daily actions. We must learn to listen and to talk about sensitive and personal matters. To begin with, it will be hard but consider the groundbreaking research that is now being conducted; and how we could change the world if everybody performed at 100 percent instead of keeping parts of themselves hidden.

Reference

2020 NCURA Distinguished Educator Designation Awardees

The NCURA Distinguished Educator designation recognizes exceptional contributions through the development, creation and delivery of NCURA’s national and global research administration educational offerings. An individual holding the Distinguished Educator designation is one who has had a major impact on multiple educational levels in professional development within NCURA.

Since 2016 NCURA has recognized members who have made sustained and distinctive educational contributions to the organization with this special designation. This year the recipients are

Jamie Caldwell
University of Kansas Medical Center

Denise Clark
University of Maryland, College Park

Vivian Holmes
Boston University School of Public Health

Jill Tincher
University of Georgia

Suzanne Rivera
Macalester College

Jakob Feldtfos Christensen is the director of Diversiunity in Denmark. He works diversity and internationalization work in research and research management through workshops, online courses and consultancy. With Lachlan, he also runs “The Diversity in Research Podcast”.

Lachlan Smith is a director at Cloud Chamber in the United Kingdom. He supports universities and research funders evaluate the impact of their research across the globe. His work helps them embrace equality, diversity, and inclusion in research and all the benefits that it can bring.
Welcome to an update from the most recent Board of Directors (“Board”) meeting. The board last met on August 1st, 2020, prior to the 62nd Annual Meeting, and there were several subjects of discussion that might be of interest to the membership:

- Rosemary Madnick, President-Elect, presented updates to the Board about AM62. The registration numbers were excellent even with a week to go, with 1,640 registrants at that time (which grew to over 1,825 by the time the meeting began). At the time the meeting started, there were 158 sessions over the 4-day meeting, 300 presenters, and 14 pre-meeting workshops over the 2 days before the meeting officially kicked off.

- The Board approved the latest Education Scholarship Fund (ESF) recipients, Georgette Dennis and Kasey Schubert. Each will receive $2,500 towards their research administration master’s degree tuition. Congratulations to them both.

- The Board discussed a new request by the Diversity and Inclusion Taskforce to bring in an outside speaker to develop a webinar on Diversity and Inclusion. This is a very timely subject matter and something like this would be a valuable benefit for the membership. In addition to this, they also are working on developing a virtual career program and implementing a climate survey this fall.

- I’m sure everyone may be wondering how NCURA is doing financially during these trying times. As I announced during the Annual Business Meeting during AM62, NCURA ended 2019 in very good financial shape. Having a good year-end position plus taking actions this year such as reducing expenditures in all areas of the budget has put us in position to stay financially sound this year.

    NCURA’s auditors completed their annual review of NCURA’s 2019 finances a few days before the conference began and again issued NCURA an unmodified opinion, which is the highest level of assurance. They also indicated that there were no internal control findings. This is entirely due to the excellent work of the NCURA staff, especially the finance team. Many thanks to them all.

That’s all for now, be sure to look for the next Board update after our November meeting.

Anne Albinak is the Director of Research Administration Operations at the Johns Hopkins University’s Whiting School of Engineering. She is currently the Treasurer of NCURA and sits on the Financial Management and Education Scholarship Fund committees. She is also a Lecturer in Johns Hopkins University’s Master of Science in Research Administration degree program. She can be reached at aalbinak@jhu.edu
When a group of subject matter experts (SMEs) were asked to teach a session in their areas of expertise for their organization’s research community, they all agreed.

To ensure that the presentations were engaging, it was recommended that they include activities to stimulate a back-and-forth conversation with the audience, and they were required to send their presentations to the trainer for review. After assessing the presentations, the trainer noticed that a majority of the presenters missed the opportunity to create a diverse set of experiences for their audience.

No matter how unbiased we believe we are, we could have subconscious opposing views about people. Unconscious biases, as defined by University of California, San Francisco, are “social stereotypes about certain groups of people that individuals form outside their own conscious awareness.” The trainer helped the SMEs revise their activities to be inclusive to the research community.

Incorporating D&I into learning exercises is not about doing the right thing, it is an important part of the learning and development process. It helps us to understand, accept and value the differences among our colleagues.

Listed below are best practices on how to integrate D&I when you are facilitating training sessions.

**Accessibility**

Refrain from using language such as, “as you can see, called out in the blue font,” because in reality there may be people who do not see what you typed in blue font. Instead, use language and tactics to reference content that is inclusive of everyone in the room. This includes, but is not limited to, those people who may be color blind, vision or hearing impaired. In online learning, ensure that there are options for closed captions.

**Case Studies**

Try not to use pronouns like she/her/hers or he/him/his; opt for gender-fluid pronouns, such as they/them. Avoid gender roles by not exaggerating behavior that is believed to be feminine or masculine, and shy away from choosing names that can determine someone’s ethnicity. Stay clear of using adjectives like: hard-working, conscientious, dependable, and interpersonal. Replace them with: accomplished, insightful, resourceful, and confident.

**Facilitation**

When facilitating sessions, it is important to use inclusive language such as, “well, in my experience, everyone has bad days, and let’s talk about how we can navigate important topics when anyone is having a bad day.” It can be difficult to redirect comments from participants who may not be inclusive, but it is our responsibility to create an environment that encourages participants to “speak up,” “raise their hand,” and “ask questions.”

**Photography**

Representation matters. Incorporating real photos and images turn boring PowerPoint slides into an engaging visual learning experience. Make sure that you incorporate images and photos of people from all different races, ethnicities, and abilities. This allows all of our learners to see themselves expressed within our materials. You may find a lack of diversity in workplace stock images available online, but a simple search will help you find what you are looking for. One great resource is blackillustrations.com.

Eliminating all unconscious bias in the training arena is impossible, but trainers who start to educate their colleagues on understanding unconscious bias can help reshape the narrative at their organization. As trainers, let’s become proficient in developing educational materials that deliver the message “there is something for everyone.”

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By Christyne Anderson, Tolise Dailey, and Melanie Hebl

Christyne Anderson, M.Ed., CRA, is the Manager for Training and Compliance in the Office for Sponsored Programs at Harvard University. In this role, she is the point of contact for sponsored audits, training university-wide and responsible for areas of financial compliance. She has experience in regulation and policy interpretation, as well as sponsored systems development. Christyne can be reached at christyne_anderson@harvard.edu

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Melanie Hebl is Education Coordinator in the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, University of Wisconsin-Madison. She is a member of the NCURA Professional Development Committee and currently serves the UW-Madison campus by designing and developing learning opportunities and educational resources for research administrators. She can be reached at melanie.hebl@wisc.edu
Cayuse empowers globally connected research that reimagines collaboration and drives societal progress. Our platform uniquely addresses the entire hierarchy of research challenges: minimizing risk, driving efficiency, optimizing planning, and enabling world-class, data-driven research management. The powerful yet intuitive apps on the Cayuse platform help modernize processes and increase transparency across all points of the research lifecycle.

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Within government, business, non-profit organizations and academia, the concept of strategic partnerships has emerged as an essential mechanism to achieve effective, broad-scale transformation to impact the needs of a rapidly changing society and world. The STEM enterprise is no different, and due to its intersectional, multidisciplinary and deeply complex nature, strategic partnerships are actually an indispensable tool to advance innovation in the 21st century. Moreover, resource-rich partnerships engender a good deal of much-needed optimism as the nation confronts immense challenges like the global pandemic and economic crises, a rapidly changing workforce with major demographic shifts, and a national reckoning on the persistence of racism that limits the full inclusion of too many who could contribute to our country’s health, security, and prosperity.

Yet, strategic partnerships do not happen automatically nor without a significant investment of time and energy, and for them to succeed they must be mutually beneficial and must advantageously leverage the appropriate assets and resources of all partners. With these imperatives in mind, the National Council of University Research Administrators (NCURA) convened a discussion group during its August 2020 annual meeting on “Enhancing STEM Research and Education Through Meaningful Partnerships with Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs).”

The session focused on the opportunities for strong partnerships between Predominantly White Institutions (PWIs), MSIs, and other institutions, as well as the pivotal role that research administrators in Sponsored Programs Offices (SPOs) can play in facilitating opportunities for collaborative research, joint federal grant applications and training of the next generation of highly qualified scientists and engineers. The authors of this article were the discussion group leaders, and the conversation focused on “why, what, how and when” these partnerships can be implemented to yield successful collaborative engagement and outcomes between MSIs, other institutions of higher education and even the private sector.

Why are Partnerships, Particularly with Minority-Serving Institutions, Important to Enhance STEM Research and Education?

Dr. Earnestine Easter opened the session by pointing out that in STEM, there is an emphasis on funding projects that are particularly innovative and transformative. These projects, by their very nature, dictate the need for partnerships that can incorporate a convergent and transdisciplinary perspective regardless of the scope of project. The National Science Board (NSB) articulated the need for partnerships in its recent Vision 2030 publication, which states that the U.S. must update its approach to science and engineering partnerships. The NSB notes the largely decentralized national STEM ecosystem and calls for strengthening existing partnerships as well as diversifying the types of partner entities. The discussants noted that one strategy to achieve this goal would be for the nation to turn to its roughly 700 two- and four-year MSIs, which are a rich resource for tapping the talents of African American, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian faculty and student scholars and researchers.

In December 2018, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering (NASEM) published its consensus study report, Minority-Serving Institutions: America’s Underutilized Resource for Strengthening the STEM Workforce, drawing the nation’s attention to MSIs as an overlooked and underappreciated strategic resource to address vexing challenges to the future of the STEM workforce in the United States. The report found in Chapter 4 indicated that the federal government should increase its investments in MSIs and, in Chapter 5, it highlighted partnerships as among the seven core strategies to cultivate MSI success. Thomas Rudin, the Director of the NASEM Board supporting the study, explained that MSI partnerships were likely to yield a great return on investment in terms of research support, more educational opportunities, and overall enhancement of the U.S. STEM enterprise. MSIs have a coordinated method of engagement toward their students, known as intentionality, and Mr. Rudin challenged MSIs to develop that same level of intentionality toward committing to increasing research capacity on campus.

Funding agencies are acutely aware of the potential of meaningful strategic partnerships with MSIs. For example, at the National Science Foundation (NSF) — where there is an emphasis on developing ideas for STEM education and research projects focused on harnessing big data, the industries of the future and many other broad innovative and forward-thinking research themes that drive investments — MSI participation is viewed as beneficial, and developing an agency-wide partnerships strategy is a priority at NSF. MSIs are uniquely situated to provide a context that establishes the relevance of this research to higher education more generally. Successful projects need to demonstrate the generalizability of their research, particularly in the areas of social science and STEM education research. MSIs provide a
context where this research can be validated and tested for educational innovations and the development of new theory. Successful research studies are designed in a way that allows the data they produce to be replicated, which is difficult to demonstrate if the studies are situated in only one type of institution. Similarly, strategic partnerships with MSIs can provide evidence of a project team’s ability to enhance the dissemination and translation of research results that will spur the likelihood of meaningful transformation of educational effectiveness.

Another benefit of strategic partnerships with MSIs is that these relationships foster a project team’s ability to provide a much more comprehensive approach to addressing research challenges. Project teams will be able to use strategies such as collective impact, where cross-sector partners collectively define project challenges as well as approaches to solving them and to measuring success. The outcome of research projects is most meaningful when diversity and inclusion has been infused throughout the entire process.

**What Kind of Partnerships are Meaningful and What are the Benchmarks of Success?**

For partnerships to be meaningful, it is essential to clearly define roles and responsibilities when developing a collaborative relationship. Partnerships can exist among all levels of government, diverse educational institutions, the philanthropic sector and with private industry. In addition, the nature of the relationships may differ dramatically, and institutions establishing partnerships should be very explicit as to how a collaboration is framed, and they should also work together to establish benchmarks to gauge success.

When proposing to collaborate on a unified research project funded by the NSF, for example, institutions may submit a single proposal or make simultaneous submissions from multiple organizations. In either case, proposals must clearly describe the roles to be played by the partner organizations, specify the managerial arrangements, and explain the advantages of the relationship. From a program perspective, terminology is important, and Dr. Easter shared her view of the difference between a research collaboration and a partnership. Both can be important relationships, but a collaboration may be less formal and involve interactions that are not integral to the performance of the project. A collaboration could involve participation in an advisory capacity about, for instance, feedback during reviews, suggestions about program goals and the dissemination of information about projects. Using this terminology, partnerships go further, and individual institutions play a much more formal role in the envisioning, development and the execution of a project, including planning for its evaluation and implementation. Dr. Easter shared her experience that partnerships tend to be more sustainable than collaborations throughout the lifecycle of a project when there is a mutual reliance on the partners and their respective roles and contributions to the success of the project. Meaningful partners share resources, and there is an expectation of mutual benefit. Partners submitting proposals to research funding agencies should ensure that their relationship is adequately described. At the NSF, simultaneously submitted collaborative proposals generally imply a well-defined, formal partnership, demonstrated by each institution having a separate proposal number, separate budget and ultimately, a separate award. Less structured relationships tend to take the form of a single proposal submission and result in subawards to the collaborating entities.

It is also of note that discussants Rashawn Farrell and Dr. Easter, based on their many years of experience in grants management and administration, explicitly included the possibility of SPO partnerships in their definitions of partnerships. Though much of the discussion centered on the establishment of multi-directional research partnerships, the discussants also noted the opportunity for research administration partnerships, as research administrators have their fingers on the pulse of a wide range of campus research activities and are often the most well-positioned to guide principal investigators to partnership activities with other campuses and with the private sector. SPOs at both PWIs and MSIs may be under-resourced with staff who are stretched near capacity; nonetheless, there is value in enhancing communication and engagement at this level. Institutions may be able to leverage geographic proximity or relationships forged from membership in organizations like NCURA or the Federal Demonstration Partnership. These actions can go a long way towards alignment of resources or removing obstacles to pave the way for much-needed funding for the partnering institutions and an important contribution to the research enterprise.

"For partnerships to be meaningful, it is essential to clearly define roles and responsibilities when developing a collaborative relationship."

Finally, whatever kinds of partnerships are forged for the vitality of the STEM enterprise, it is critical to establish the benchmarks needed to gauge the success of the relationship. Importantly, equitably including all parties in that benchmarking signifies the relationship as a true and meaningful partnership. For example, if the nature of the partnership is to prove the success of an educational innovation, then the partners must be able mutually to define a way to assess whether the infusion of a new concept into existing courses is making a difference in student outcomes. On the other hand, if the partnership is between the research administration staff of a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) and a nearby higher research-intensive institution, the latter would need to understand what success would look like for the HBCU, and together they could agree how to define and measure relevant indicators.

**How can SPOs Foster the Development of these Partnerships?**

SPOs can play a pivotal role in fostering these relationships, provided that campus leaders have the institutional will to support the vision. PWIs must understand the above-described imperatives, such as the current social, cultural and economic climate and the needs of the nation’s future workforce, and prioritize strategic investments by devoting resources to SPOs. Leaders at MSIs must similarly demonstrate institutional willingness to understand the value their institutions can bring to American innovation and economic security by investing in research administration. MSI leaders should also understand the value that investing in research capacity can bring to the university as this will attract professors and researchers in funded fields, translating not only into research dollars but also into prospective students in these fields, along with tuition and rising enrollment.
SPOs at MSIs require not only adequate staffing but also full integration into the strategic vision and priorities of the institution.

With support, there are numerous steps that SPOs can take to facilitate meaningful partnerships between MSIs and PWIs. Research administrators regularly distribute information about opportunities and announcements for research grants via eblasts and social media, but they can look beyond collaborations that are comfortable to forge innovative and unique relationships. SPOs at PWIs can articulate to their faculty that partnering with MSIs should be viewed as a mutually beneficial strategy and can create a welcoming space for collaboration and synergy with the overall goal of promoting STEM. SPOs can organize in-person or virtual meetings with neighboring institutions to look for commonalities between institutions. Faculty get-togethers can be organized, with larger PWI institutions inviting local MSI researchers to the PWI campus to discuss potential partnerships. SPOs might also prompt their faculty to imagine how other regional and local faculty can expand their teams’ research capability.

Similarly, SPOs in MSIs can hold public events that showcase the research strengths and capabilities on their campuses. They can invite PWI researchers, as well as local and regional business and political leaders, to learn about the vital assets of the institution. MSIs might leverage funding opportunities connected to NSF Big Ideas or NIH Requests for Information to hold workshops that provide an opportunity for experts to connect with colleagues with similar interests. Drawing on his expertise as a federal grant manager with a passion for MSIs, Mr. Farrrior reminded SPOs at these institutions to challenge their faculty to think beyond finite funding pools dedicated solely for MSIs and to think outside-the-box by designing partnerships with neighboring institutions through which they can tap into greater resources.

It is essential that corresponding SPOs at institutions considering partnerships communicate and set the stage for enhanced communication among their researchers. Researchers and research administrators should build rapport and engage in conversation beyond the proposal, which will set the stage for a successful relationship poised to yield results greater than what was imagined. Such expansive thinking will likely attract partner funding, whether from diverse academic institutions, federal partners, international collaborations, state governments, philanthropists or private sector investors.

When Should SPOs Act to Enhance Partnerships?

Now is the time for SPOs to be forward-thinking and creative about creating and enhancing broad and diverse partnerships that span across every institution type, prominently including MSIs, as well as across every sector, from academia to philanthropy to government. Indeed, the very nature of some federally funded programs virtually requires partnerships to bring about broad-scale impact societal change. The NSF Engineering Research Centers Program and Science and Technology Centers (STCs) are an excellent example, because they require an educational component that builds in broadening participation and is therefore ripe for MSI participation. Indeed, every NSF program solicitation evaluates the broader societal impacts of a proposed project, so partnerships that demonstrate meaningful broadening participation strategies and the imperatives articulated above can substantially strengthen a proposal.

Strategic partnerships are frequently celebrated as exceptional achievements on many campuses. They are indeed worthy of celebration, but rather than being the exception, they should be encouraged as the norm. Because research funding is limited—particularly for early career scientists and engineers—more innovative approaches to securing research grants are vital to sustaining and increasing external research support. Research administrators on campuses should encourage formal and informal outreach to prospective partners as they can help play a vital role in facilitating connections across campuses. Indeed, Mr. Rudin argued that research administrators have both an obligation and an opportunity to build these partnerships. He aptly noted that nearly every college and university president has issued a statement over the past several months condemning the death of George Floyd and committing to racial justice. While these statements may be important, they risk becoming empty promises unless concrete, evidence-based actions are taken to encourage equity, diversity, and inclusion across the academic enterprise. Strategic partnerships that meaningfully include MSIs provide the opportunity to make equity, diversity, inclusion, and excellence a tangible reality in the academic system. Furthermore, strategic partnerships contribute to the research enterprise and strengthen the economic, social and cultural base of this nation. Research administrators are uniquely poised to promote these partnerships, make a difference and lead this change.

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Earnestine Easter, PhD, is a program director in the National Science Foundation, Division of Graduate Education, Directorate for Education and Human Resources. She leads the STEM Workforce Development theme of the EHR Core Research program and EGR Building Capacity in STEM Education Research competition and supports the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Undergraduate Program broadening participation research track. She can be reached at eeaster@nsf.gov

Rashawn Farrrior has been a part of the National Science Foundation since 2007. He has over 18 years of federal experience in grant administration, including five years with the National Institutes of Health. Mr. Farrrior is the Team Leader in the Division of Grants and Agreements for the Education and Human Resources Directorate. He can be reached at lfarrrior@nsf.gov

Tom Rudin is the Director of the Board on Higher Education and Workforce at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Prior to joining NASM, he was senior vice president for career readiness and senior vice president for advocacy, government relations and development at the College Board from 2006-2014. Prior to that, he was a policy analyst at NIH. He can be reached at trudin@nas.edu
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Diversity is essential for successful leadership in times of crisis. During crises, the presence of diversity and the practice of inclusion is essential to challenge us to look at problems differently (Why Leadership Diversity, 2020). Instead of feeling stress and defeat, view these times as an opportunity to empower and be empowered.

Leaders are now faced with making unprecedented, complex decisions which require diversity in life experience paired with diversity in rich professional expertise, along with the willingness to be inclusive of other ideas. During these times, strategic diversity and inclusion initiatives may fade into the background, falling behind more urgent matters such as reopening the institution and maintaining a certain level of productivity. However, allowing diversity and inclusion to fall by the wayside screams loudly to minorities in the institution as well as to the surrounding community that these issues are not important, which will have potential adverse effects in the future. In fact, inclusion and diversity are necessary for renewal and growth positioning.

Research has proven that diversity and inclusion foster a more innovative and resilient workplace. These characteristics are imperative for organizational recovery. Indeed, companies may unlock the power of inclusion and diversity as an enabler of business performance and organizational health and contribute to the wider effort to revive economies and safeguard social cohesion (Dolan, Hunt, Prince & Sancier-Sultan, 2020).

COVID-19

COVID-19 has presented the world with a health crisis that has never been experienced before. Employee health and safety, as well as the health and safety of students, must be the primary consideration of any organization during the coronavirus pandemic. One of the greatest challenges is understanding the needs and circumstances of employees who themselves are diverse in all of the traditional measures but also are affected by widely varying life, work and family conditions (Why Leadership Diversity, 2020). Circumstances such as virtual schooling children, caring for elderly parents, and lacking broadband access may all pose issues that require managers and organizational leaders to be equity champions during these times. As an equity champion, leaders must be understanding and willing to accommodate employees with the necessary resources and support they need to successfully and efficiently perform their jobs.

Understanding and compassion begins with active listening. Be careful about listening only to
respond. Be present in the conversation. Have conversations with your staff to find out how they are being affected both personally and professionally. This allows you to make more informed, equitable and accommodating decisions.

**Accommodations & Access**
During the time of COVID-19 many people are working remotely. Generally, decisions are made based on the majority. As leaders, you must practice mindfulness and know that not everyone has access to internet, computers/laptops, printers, and other equipment that may be necessary for them to be successful in performing their jobs efficiently. When having conversations and making decisions at a high level, it is important that decision-makers are mindful to not unintentionally exclude people. Premier accommodations and access are key to ensuring performance efficiency. Offer hotspots and laptops to all employees. Additionally, allow employees to operate on a flex schedule so they can be more productive.

**Communication**
Communicate, communicate, communicate. When people cannot be in the same space, effective and consistent communication is vital in ensuring that your employees are informed and engaged. In conversing with fellow diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) practitioners, they all express the importance of constant communication. Communication keeps the lines of trust, opportunity, and access open for all. Communication also provides a sense of care and loyalty.

**Safety & Social Distancing**
When people return to work in a traditional office setting, it’s leadership’s responsibility to make certain that all employees and students are safe and practicing Centers for Disease Control (CDC)/World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines. At this point, more than one million people have died from COVID-19 worldwide. If employees feel afraid or unsure, they cannot be productive. Leaders are to be proactive by providing resources for employees to talk with an expert to assist them with navigating these trying times, as well as supplying employees with personal protection equipment (PPE). Do not deflect to ignore the issue(s). Instead work to ensure that all employees feel safe, protected and calm.

**Intersectionality**
Although COVID-19 has taken center attention in the media, there are other major issues that have managed to decenter COVID-19 in the United States. Intersectionality is the interconnected nature of social categorizations, such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage. Due to intersectionality many are facing multiple pandemics, whether or not acknowledged across the broad spectrum, as evidenced by protests concerning racial injustice.

Research has proven that diversity and inclusion foster a more innovative and resilient workplace.

**Racism & Protests**
The world witnessed protests globally in response to the continued racial injustice displayed in America. The angst, the disgust, the fear, and so many other emotions surfaced during the pandemic as many witnessed the senseless murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd, all of which were encapsulated by racism. Having observed these violent murders during a pandemic likely heightened the attention and emotion displayed during protests. Additionally, many Chinese, Chinese Americans and immigrants became victims of xenophobia as a result of COVID-19 being referenced as the “Chinese virus.” All of these things caused those encompassed by multiple life intersections to become exhausted, which could potentially impact their normal functionality.

**DACA**
In June of this year, the Supreme Court blocked the current presidential administration’s plan to end the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Although temporary, the Supreme Court provided a bandage that can be abruptly ripped off at any minute, exposing the fear, anxiety and danger over 700,000 “Dreamers” have had to live with for so long (Cardona, 2020). This is just another example of how intersectionality plays a major role in people’s everyday lives.

**Natural Disasters**
In addition to the many ways in which people are affected by intersectionality, the world has been ravished by natural disasters. The Australian bushfire burned an estimated 18.6 million hectares, destroyed over 5,900 buildings, and killed at least 34 people, while over 400 people were killed due to the residual smoke inhalation. There have been devastating floods in Indonesia, the eruption of a 43-year dormant volcano in the Philippines, massive earthquakes across the globe, locust swarms in East Africa and parts of India and Asia, and a cyclone in India and Bangladesh. In addition, we’ve seen floods, forest fires, tornadoes, and ravishing hurricanes, all of which precede the damage (emotional, economical, and physical) and lasting effects of them all.

**Effects & Response**
Intersectionality examines how factors experienced at individual and group levels are shaped by processes and structures of power (i.e., capitalism, globalization, patriarchy, racism, nationalism, and xenophobia) to create an interplay of advantages and vulnerabilities (Hankivsky, 2012). The effects of all of the different happenings in the environment can be overwhelming, particularly by groups whom find themselves at multiple intersections. Consider the actual impact of all of these things taking place simultaneously. The staff that you lead and colleagues that you work with have potentially lost loved ones to COVID-19, injustices, and natural disasters. These events may very well lead to depression, stress, anxiety, fear, chronic inflammation (USC, 2019) and a lack of sense of belonging.

For leaders, the proper response to all of these things should be guided by cultural sensitivity, compassion and empathy. As mentioned earlier, leaders should offer flexible work schedules for those in need, perform mental health check-ins with staff, as well as encourage staff to check on their peers. Remind staff about employee assistance programs. Host themed virtual meetings to lighten the mood. Act as an ally by challenging bias at all times. Be a voice for the voiceless. Intentionally engage your staff in decision-making and feedback. Learn about other cultures to be better prepared to address a wide array of issues. Become a system change agent to eliminate systemic oppression. Encourage your staff to take a day off and to step away from the computer throughout the day. Further, self-care is important. Take care of yourself in order to lead positively and effectively for the long haul.
Overwhelming, yet exhilarating, may be an understatement to describe the majority of 2020. For the first time, people of all races and ethnicities from many countries stood together in solidarity to fight demonstrated injustices and prejudices. Amongst the many organizations and corporations standing against racism, our beloved NCURA made the decision to stand with its many members impacted by racial injustice, racism, and hate and have committed to doing the work to provide a safe and equitable space for all NCURA members. Thank you!

**Regional Diversity & Inclusion Features**

NCURA has been working to create and promote diversity initiatives at every level of the organization. Each of the eight regions has a responsibility to its regional membership to practice diversity and be intentional about inclusion while providing equitable opportunities to volunteerism and leadership roles. Congratulations to the regions featured below for supporting national diversity and inclusion (D&I) initiatives.

**Region I by Louise Griffin**

On July 30th, Region I hosted an online discussion on Diversity and Inclusion, facilitated by Alexis Stokes, Director of Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging from the Harvard University School of Engineering and Applied Sciences. Alexis graciously agreed to lead the discussion group for Region I members. In advance of the session, participants reviewed several timely articles:

- How Higher Education Can Fight Racism, Speak Up When It’s Hard
- How Implicit Bias and Lack of Diversity Undermine Science
- Top 10 Practical Steps for Advancing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Higher Education
- What does it take to make an institution more diverse?

Specific to research administration, Alexis advised the following:

- Make faculty aware of available grant supplements for underrepresented groups (i.e., NSF REU program)
- Publicize grant opportunities for underrepresented minorities (i.e., NSF Louis Stokes program)
- Provide faculty and students with assistance in navigating the rules and bureaucracy as well as the “unwritten rules”
- Sponsor lunch meetings for graduate students and postdocs
- Make hiring of post docs a process and not an “unofficial network”
- Highlight and promote the work being done by underrepresented faculty
- When recruiting staff, be mindful of the recruiting process (i.e., consider if there is bias in the application or interview process, actively work with human resources to ensure a diverse applicant pool, and always have multiple people involved in the interview process)

The discussion group was very engaged and appreciated hearing Alexis’ perspectives on a variety of topics relevant to diversity and research administration.

**Region II by Katie McKeon**

Region II is always looking for ways to engage all regional members. At Region II’s Fall Regional Meeting 2019 and at AM61, the steering committee developed a survey to poll regional members regarding ways to improve volunteerism and initiatives related to diversity and inclusion in the region. In 2020, Region II hopes to analyze and respond those results by creating a Diversity & Inclusion working group that will devise a strategy for Region II to engage with diversity and inclusion. If any Region II member is interested in volunteering or sharing ideas, please contact Region II’s Chair-Elect, Catherine Parker at caparker@umd.edu.

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Region III by Emily Devereux & Laura Letbetter

Over the past year, Region III has acted strategically to advance diversity and inclusion in sustainable ways. Actions were initiated by a chair's initiative to increase the region's commitment, starting with the formation of an ad hoc diversity and inclusion committee for 2019-2020. This committee assisted the chair-elect and planning committee for the spring 2020 meeting's diversity and inclusion considerations, launched the Region III diversity and inclusion climate survey in June 2020, and in August 2020 became a standing committee of the Region.

The standing committee's scope promotes NCURA's commitment to diversity and inclusion through regional initiatives, representation, and action. The goals of the diversity and inclusion survey's data collection and assessment of regional climate are to better understand and serve the needs of the membership, to break down barriers for research administrators, and to provide information to the executive team for informed decisions and solutions for regional needs. The survey's feedback has revealed opportunities to increase members' understanding of the meaning of diversity and inclusion and will be a priority for serving the membership in 2020-2021. Preliminary findings were presented to the membership at the Region III business meeting during AM62. Region III's ongoing commitment mirrors National's statement on diversity and inclusion.

Region IV by Matt Richter

Region IV is proud to share several recent and ongoing diversity and inclusion efforts.

While we regretfully had to cancel the Joint Region III and IV Spring Meeting this past April, 2020, Region IV is proud of the combined efforts of both regions to plan what would have been a successful conference. The theme of the 2020 Spring Meeting was “Expanding the Circle: One Profession, Diverse Perspectives.” Through this theme, Regions III and IV worked together to recognize and celebrate the diversity of both regions’ memberships and the profession of research administration. Thanks to the time and talent of amazing volunteers from both regions, diversity and inclusion was incorporated into all aspects of meeting planning and program design, from selecting the keynote speaker to session and workshop topics to menu and activity options.

Continuing the momentum gained through planning the 2020 spring meeting, Region IV is assembling a taskforce to draft guidelines that can be used to assist others in being mindful of diversity and inclusiveness in all content that the region puts out for our members. Region IV is also proud to share that Bonniejean Zitske, former Chair of Region IV (2018-2019) and current volunteer, will continue to champion diversity and inclusion efforts on behalf of the region going forward, and new volunteers will be invited to contribute to this important work as well. In addition, Region IV has proposed that an entire track be devoted to diversity and inclusion topics for the next Region IV Spring Meeting in Minneapolis (April, 2021).

Region V by Becky Castillo

Region V is excited to announce its diversity and inclusion initiatives. The year 2020 marked the inaugural year for Region V’s Mustang Mentoring Program (MMP). The program was designed for individuals in a leadership role to serve as mentors at the regional level while providing educational and professional resources for the development of MMP mentees. The MMP is open to the entire regional membership through an application process and the curriculum is based on The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations by James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner.

This year Region V also diversified the Region’s Executive Committee by naming Jeffrey Garza as the Chair-Appointed At-Large Member. Jeffrey is from Texas A&M University— Kingsville, a PUI and Hispanic-serving institution. He has been a member of NCURA since 2017 and has served as a volunteer on several committees. Here are a few words from Jeffrey about his experience with NCURA.

“I strongly believe NCURA recognizes the importance of diversity in research administration and is very inclusive of the different kinds of institutions represented in our field. Being an employee from a PUI who works in a small central office, I feel NCURA is a vital organization. It is exciting to hear from colleagues from different institutions. Attending webinars, conferences, or meetings, provides useful information and tips from other research administrators that can translate into our office. Research administration is constantly changing, and NCURA keeps our community updated and informed. I look forward to continuing my involvement in NCURA in the years to come.”

Be on the Lookout

NCURA’s Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Task Force is working to ensure diversity, equity and inclusion for all. The desire is for national D&I initiatives to flow down to each of the regions. Given the 2020 presidential charges, the D&I Task Force has developed the Diversity & Inclusion Collaborate Community, which is already active. Please be sure to join the Diversity & Inclusion Community in Collaborate. There will also be an organizational climate survey administered this fall. Please be on the lookout for the survey. It is imperative that all members participate in the survey. Data collected from the survey will help to inform decision-making in regards to programming, member opportunities, professional development offerings, and targeted member recruitment. Finally, the Task Force has worked to develop a virtual career development program for junior members who want to develop their leadership skills and abilities as inclusive leaders. That program should be forthcoming in 2021.

References


Laneika K. Musalini, MHRD, is the Director of Grants Development and Sponsored Programs at Tri-County Technical College overseeing strategic funding initiatives, proposal and budget development, and sponsored programs compliance. Laneika chairs NCURA’s Diversity & Inclusion Task Force, as well as serves as Region III’s Diversity & Inclusion Committee chair and D&I advisor to the Region III executive committee. She can be reached at LMUSALIN@tctc.edu

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Detecting and Preventing Grant Fraud

By Maureen M. Weir

The National Science Foundation Office of Inspector General investigates grant fraud to help protect NSF funds supporting research projects, facilities, and STEM education. In this article, we’ll explore our role in investigating grant fraud, and how you can help prevent it.

What exactly is grant fraud?
Anyone can make a mistake. Fraud is different because it entails knowingly and intentionally providing false information, fraudulent documents, or false statements. Examples of fraud include award proposals with falsified letters of support or lack of disclosure by the principal investigator (PI), annual or final reports containing false information, and fake financial records.

How does NSF OIG investigate grant fraud?
Our federal law enforcement officers (special agents) and investigative attorneys work together to investigate grant fraud allegations made by PIs, NSF program officers, other federal agencies, and auditors. We also receive grant fraud tips through our anonymous phone and internet hotlines. To investigate fraud allegations, we may issue subpoenas, conduct interviews, review grant documents, and examine financial records. We also coordinate with other federal agencies and the U.S. Department of Justice to further investigations, execute search and arrest warrants, and recommend administrative action as appropriate.

What are some red flags for grant fraud?
Red flags for fraud may include excess spending in a given budget category, charging expenses that are unrelated to an award’s purpose, charging unrelated research to an award to spend down the funds, and continuing to spend funds after the end of an award. Issues often arise when a university does not have adequate controls in place or faculty and staff are not following university policies.

What can be done to help prevent grant fraud?
Knowledge of the rules and strong internal controls are key for identifying and preventing grant fraud. Although NSF solicitations and award letters reference applicable rules and regulations, formal training on current NSF grant requirements and government regulations can help ensure faculty and staff know which costs are allowable, allocable, and reasonable for NSF awards. In addition, institutions can find updates on notable policy changes and revisions on NSF’s website (nsf.gov).

Ensuring the university has adequate safeguards and internal controls to identify and self-report possible instances of fraud are also critical. Examples of internal controls that may help prevent grant fraud include requiring detailed support for expenses charged to an award, and carefully reviewing those expenses to ensure all costs are allowable, allocable, and reasonable. Reviewing certifications made by PIs throughout the award is another way to help ensure grant funds are spent properly. Certifications are an important part of proving the elements of fraud because they include warnings such as “the statements made herein are true and complete to the best of his/her knowledge” and “willful provision of false information in this application and its supporting documents or in reports required under an ensuing award is a criminal offense.” Faculty and staff should pay close attention to the representations made in the certifications and reach out to PIs to confirm answers are true, complete, and accurate.

How can I report fraud, waste, abuse, or whistleblower reprisal?
- Web: www.nsf.gov/oig/report-fraud/form.jsp
- Anonymous Hotline: 1.800.428.2189
- Email: oig@nsf.gov
- Mail: 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314
  ATTN: OIG HOTLINE

Have a question or an idea for NSF OIG’s Corner?
Please contact us at
OIGPublicAffairs@nsf.gov

Maureen M. Weir, CFE, is a special agent with NSF OIG. She started her federal career in 2009 at the Department of Homeland Security OIG and joined NSF in 2016. She can be reached at mweir@nsf.gov
Perhaps We Should have a Conversation about Racial Disparity in Research Administration?

By Jennifer Shambrook, Celeste Rivera-Nuñez and Tameria C. Mace

Authors’ note: This invited article draws from information in the prize-winning poster presented at the 2020 NCURA Annual meeting.

The Research Administrator (RA) community is predominantly made up of highly educated, specialized professionals, over 80%–85% of whom are female, as shown in both the RAAP-1 and 2 (Kerridge & Scott, 2018; Kerridge et al., 2020) as well as the four iterations of Research Administration Stress Perception Surveys (RASPerS) (Shambrook et al., 2015). We work with those who are even more highly educated and specialized than us. We work in colleges, hospitals, and research institutes with people who have dedicated their lives toward solving problems related to public health, safety, improved quality of life, and preserving the environment and our history. One might assume that in such a lofty work environment we would be immune to the ignominious behaviors that result in racial disparity. Analysis of data from the 2020 RASPerS and comparisons with 2010 and 2015 RASPerS sought to provide facts to support or dispute that assumption.

Institutions and organizations all around the U.S. have been very quick to make public, overt statements to say that racism is contrary to their core beliefs. However, actions are covert statements. Do the actions of our workplaces and our profession as a group support equality? When looking at representativeness in the profession, position level distribution, salary, experience of bullying in the workplace, and perceived social support, do we see equity or differences? The data paints a clearer picture the experience of bullying in the workplace, and perceived social support, are about inclusivity in our hiring practices as research administrators.

Is racial distribution within RA representative of the U.S. population?

We used the 2019 U.S. Census information as our benchmark. As shown in Figure 1, we found that while only 76% of the U.S. population is white, 83% of research administrators are white. We find the white RA group is over-represented in research administration when compared to the U.S. population. All other groups, with the exception of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander (NH/PI) RA group, were under-represented. The groups with the most significant under-representation were those who identified as African American (AA) or Hispanic (HI) RA groups.

When looking at change over time, we see growth in the Hispanic and Asian groups but declines in the African American (AA) and Native American/Alaska Native (NA/AN) RA groups. Despite a slight decline in the white RA group (83.9% to 82.1%), the group continues to be significantly over-represented as the U.S. white population is only 76.3%. The greatest disparity in representation is with the Hispanic group (7.5% RA to 18.5% U.S.) and AA group (4.4% RA to 13.4% U.S.). In comparing 2015 RASPerS to 2020 RASPerS, we see the Hispanic RA group representation shows the greatest growth (4.6% to 7.5%), while the AA RA group representation shows the greatest decline (6.4% to 4.4%).

Perhaps we should have a conversation about how intentional we are about inclusivity in our hiring practices as research administrators.
Is there racial disparity in retaining valuable, highly trained employees?
Trained research administrators are a rare and very valuable workforce because of our level of specialization. The research community needs to retain and expand the valuable members of our niche profession. Unfortunately, along with the decline in representation, Figure 2 also indicates that current RAs who belong to AA, Asian, NH/PI, and NA/AN minority groups are more likely to consider leaving the RA profession when compared to white or HI RA groups. AA, Asian, NH/PI and NA/AN group RAs also reported a higher incidence of saying they were actively looking for a job outside of the profession at the present time.

Perhaps we should have a conversation about what we can do to retain minority group members in research administration.

Is there racial disparity in salary, opportunity for advancement, and workplace experience?
When looking at recruiting or retaining employees, three reasons that are often given for changing positions are: salary, opportunity for advancement, and workplace experience. RASPerS 2020 data was used to explore those factors further for RAs of color.

When looking at salary, we find that there are mixed results with the majority group distribution among salary levels being consistent with the distributional proportion of the majority group. When compared to racial distribution, the HI group is slightly over-represented and all other groups are slightly under-represented with looking at salaries over $100K. When looking at salaries less than $50K, NA/AN and white RAs are slightly under-represented by distribution. There does not appear to be significant disproportionality in salary distribution with respect to race.

If salary does not appear to be an issue, do we see evidence of racial disparity when it comes to position level? RASPerS 2020 collected 750 responses to the request to designate position title. When comparing proportional distribution by race, there is very little proportional distribution by race. For executive-level positions, AA, Asian, NH/PI and NA/AN are not only under-represented, no one reported being in one of those top tier positions in those groups. Director positions are under-represented by HI, Asian, and NH/PI groups. The lowest level positions are very under-represented by the majority group and over-represented by the HI, AA, and Asian group. Asian RAs are very over-represented in lower level positions and very under-represented in all leadership positions.

Perhaps we should have a conversation about time investment by leadership in mentoring, intentional coaching for advancement, and access to professional development opportunities for RAs in minority groups in order to recruit and retain these valuable RA workforce members.

The third factor that is often named when looking at retention and recruitment is workplace experience. The 2020 RASPerS collected data from 734 RAs regarding their experience of bullying. Bullying was defined as repeated exposure to unpleasant or degrading treatment while that person finds it difficult to defend themselves against it (Tabakakis, et al., 2020.) While the available answers for “yes” included frequencies of daily, weekly, monthly, and a few times, the scoring is binary. The answer we hope for is “no.”

Although most institutions have a stated “zero tolerance” policy for bullying, over 72% of research administrators reported they have experienced bullying in the workplace. To determine disparity, we again looked at representativeness. As shown in Table 3, we see that while AA RAs make up only 4.63% of the sample shown, they make up 18.18% of the RAs reporting they experience bullying on a daily basis. Asian and NH/PI research administrators also report disproportionally high experience of bullying on a regular basis.

While we might assume the bullying was done by stressed, frantic investigators trying to get a proposal out the door or an award set up, that is not necessarily the case. RAs reported bullying was coming from supervisors, institutional leadership, investigators, and fellow RAs. Further analysis is planned on the data elements that will be shared with the RA community.

Perhaps it is time to have a conversation about appropriate actions when experiencing or witnessing bullying in the workplace. Silent witness can be perceived as apathy or approval by the victim of bullying behavior.
Table 1. Are salaries distributed in proportion to RA racial distribution?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of pop</th>
<th>&lt;$50K</th>
<th>$50-74.9K</th>
<th>$75-99.9K</th>
<th>&gt;$100K</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>86.28%</td>
<td>87.65%</td>
<td>85.87%</td>
<td>86.78%</td>
<td>85.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HI</td>
<td>7.86%</td>
<td>6.17%</td>
<td>7.25%</td>
<td>7.49%</td>
<td>8.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>4.66%</td>
<td>2.47%</td>
<td>5.07%</td>
<td>5.73%</td>
<td>3.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4.79%</td>
<td>3.70%</td>
<td>5.43%</td>
<td>5.29%</td>
<td>3.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH/PI</td>
<td>0.53%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.72%</td>
<td>0.88%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA/AN</td>
<td>0.93%</td>
<td>1.23%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>2.20%</td>
<td>0.60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Is distribution of position levels representative of RA racial distribution?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020 RASPerS RA Population (n.750)</th>
<th>Executive (n.24)</th>
<th>Director (n.158)</th>
<th>Associate &amp; Assistant Director (n.194)</th>
<th>Senior Level Individual Contributor (n.152)</th>
<th>Individual Contributor (n.260)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>82.1</td>
<td>87.5</td>
<td>86.1</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>82.9</td>
<td>75.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH/PI</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA/AN</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Is distribution of workplace bullying proportional to racial distribution in RAs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>% of pop</th>
<th>Yes, daily</th>
<th>Yes, weekly</th>
<th>Yes, monthly</th>
<th>Yes, a few times</th>
<th>No, never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>86.51%</td>
<td>77.27%</td>
<td>83.64%</td>
<td>83.64%</td>
<td>89.67%</td>
<td>82.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HI</td>
<td>7.77%</td>
<td>4.55%</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>7.27%</td>
<td>6.55%</td>
<td>11.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>4.63%</td>
<td>18.18%</td>
<td>5.00%</td>
<td>5.45%</td>
<td>3.53%</td>
<td>3.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>4.77%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>6.67%</td>
<td>7.27%</td>
<td>4.03%</td>
<td>7.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH/PI</td>
<td>0.54%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>1.67%</td>
<td>1.82%</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NA/AN</td>
<td>0.82%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>1.01%</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop Total</td>
<td>734</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Pop Total</td>
<td>3.00%</td>
<td>8.17%</td>
<td>7.49%</td>
<td>54.09%</td>
<td>27.25%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions
This data indicates that racial disparity does exist in research administration. The purpose of this study is to raise awareness, provide data that can dispel false assumptions, and provide a springboard for some awkward conversations.

Just as it was surprising to find that male gender was more of a predictor of higher salary in research administrators than education, experience, or credentials (Shambrook, Roberts & Triscari, 2011) in the 2010 RASPerS, the results when looking at racial disparity are equally surprising. The authors do not make the assumption that the data necessarily points to intentionality causing disparity. Our assumption is that the lack of awareness or lack of intention are the more likely culprits when it comes to racial disparity in research administration.

What can I do?
Here are some ideas for you to consider that every one of us at all levels of hierarchy can do:

• Share: Share this information to raise awareness.
• Appoint: Appoint yourself as a diversity advocate.
• Be: Be sensitive to what your colleagues’ workplace experience might be.
• Do: Do what you can to promote diversity and a better work-life experience for those who are not a part of the majority group.
• Remember: Remember that diversity is not different faces in lockstep with the majority.
• Embrace: Embrace the richness of perspective brought to us when diversity is truly allowed to flourish.

It is time to have these conversations. Face whatever awkwardness the conversations may bring. Look at the evidence in your own staff rooms, committees, emerging leadership and mentoring programs. It will take all of us working together to bring about the change we truly want to see.

References

Our professional workforce, the faces of our leadership, the members of our committees, and participants in our mentorship programs should be a representative reflection of our greater population.

Recommendations
It is important that leaders with the power to enact change create policies and procedures that promote inclusion, create safe work environments and provide mentorship for marginalized research administrators. It is important that every member of the RA community intentionally work toward creating equality in the profession. Our professional workforce, the faces of our leadership, the members of our committees, and participants in our mentorship programs should be a representative reflection of our greater population.

Human history has clearly shown that equality is not a naturally occurring phenomenon. Equality is only achieved when those with privilege and power become intentional about efforts to make it happen. This takes more than lip service and diversity statements.
Education Scholarship Fund
Select Committee Update

The NCURA Education Scholarship Fund (ESF) is an expression of NCURA’s commitment to the development of research administrators. The Fund was established in 2011 to provide support to members who seek graduate education in research administration. A committee that represents NCURA’s broad membership has responsibility for selecting scholarship recipients each year. The ESF is designed to provide access to scholarships through the generous donations of NCURA members. Applications are open and accepted following an announcement in spring and fall of each year. Since 2018, nine NCURA members have received this very welcome financial support from their peers as they pursue their career goals through education. Learn a bit more about the fall 2020 recipients below.

Georgetta M. Dennis, CRA, CPRA, CFRA
Auburn University

During the 2015 PRA/FRA Conference Georgetta had the pleasure of attending the Department Administrator’s Boot Camp. In a discussion session she had the lightbulb moment that she was limiting herself in her role. She said, “So many presenters at that conference turned my entire perspective of research administration around. NCURA provided the resources to help guide me through tough situations that resulted in positive outcomes.”

Georgetta would like all departmental research administrators to recognize that they hold a valuable position not only for their departments, but their organizations as a whole. At times departmental research administrators can feel as if they are at the bottom of the totem pole but they must remember that the bottom provides a strong foundation!

She sees her involvement in NCURA increasing as she strives to welcome and encourage new and seasoned research administrators to get involved, both on and off their campuses. Georgetta added: “We each have something to offer and can learn so much from sharing our experiences. The guidance and friendships I have gained from NCURA are immeasurable. My hope is to give back so that others can experience the passion that research administration brings to the research horizon.”

Georgetta is passionate about mentoring; she intends to continue being involved in the Region III Mentoring program (R3RAMP). She stated that this program has by far been one of the highlights of her career. Georgetta concluded that her mentor, Rashonda Harris, “has transformed me from an ugly duckling that was afraid to step out of my comfort zone into a flamingo that is always willing to share my experiences to help others. My goal is to serve on the Educational Scholarship Fund committee in order to give back and show that no matter how long you have been in the career field there are always new educational opportunities you can pursue. Volunteering is the heartbeat of NCURA.”

Kasey Schubert, CRA
Tufts University

Kasey was first introduced to NCURA through a workshop held at her institution. The next year, NCURA returned for another workshop, and soon after that she joined as a member to further her education in research administration.

When Kasey started working in higher education, research administration was only a part of her job. She very quickly found she loved research administration and she cared about helping researchers find and manage funding so that they can be successful in their research. In a short time, research administration became her full job. Now, she has been working in research administration for almost nine years, and sees herself continuing in it for many years to come. Kasey shared, “It’s because of this that I decided to pursue a master’s degree in research administration. I want to always be the most knowledgeable research administrator that I can be, and also be a valuable resource to others on my team. Earning my degree will help me to accomplish both of these goals.”

Kasey attended the NCURA conference in San Juan earlier this year, and was impressed by how informative the entire conference was, and by the knowledgeable speakers and the variety of content. She said, “I can definitely see myself starting to learn to be a speaker or co-panelist at conferences in the future. Earning my graduate degree will help to give me the knowledge and confidence required to do this.”

Congratulations to Georgetta and Kasey!
The Past

Tohoku University lies outside Tokyo’s central corridor, in the northeastern part of Japan’s main island in the Tohoku region, which conducts its own affairs nationally and internationally. The region was made famous through the Hasekura-delegation, a diplomatic envoy sent by feudal war lord Date Masamune in 1613, to establish contact with the Vatican, asking for the dispatch of Christian missionaries. A first global rapprochement between different cultures, religions, and mindsets.

Since its foundation in 1907, Tohoku University has been a trailblazer in many ways too. When Masataro Sawayanagi moved to Sendai in 1911 to become the University’s first president, his ideas about students needing to be equipped with skills and knowledge to contribute positively to society were considered highly innovative at that time. He also believed the university’s educational mission should accept all kinds of students without discrimination based on class, gender, or nationality. These ideas were adopted in the three university principles of “Open Doors”, “Research First”, and “Practice Oriented Research and Education.” In 1911, the first students from technical high schools were accepted, followed by the first female students at a Japanese university in 1913.

Later Tohoku opened its doors a little further by also accepting foreign students. As a result of this change, two foreign students to receive a Ph.D. in science from a Japanese University of note were Chen Jiangong (Ph.D. in 1929), who is considered one of the founders of modern Chinese mathematics, and Su Buqing (Ph.D. in 1931), who later served as President of Fudan University.

The Present

In light of globalization and internationalization, Japan has become more open. Foreign workers and citizens are not a rarity anymore – even in the countryside. Innovation and diversity have become more than just buzzwords and are instead finding their way into policy. Japanese language education and English conversation services are booming. Foreigners taking part in meetings held in Japanese and Japanese staff chit-chatting in fluent English are common. The University, which is a stronghold for Japanese public servants, started a fundamental transformation process in 2004, when the status of national universities was changed to corporation status and a third mission – contribution to society – was added to the existing missions of research and education. Diversity and inclusion have become a part of the mission as well.

There is a popular phrase we often use about social networks: “Diversity is being invited to the party; Inclusion is being asked to dance.” Increasing the ratio of a diverse faculty representation has become imperative for universities. Concrete numbers in the form of KPIs can found in project applications and university visions. Ministry surveys not only show the share of female researchers or foreign faculty, but also recently the number of University Research Administrators (URA).

URAs are the Japanese term for research promotion professionals or industry-academia-government coordinators. The term was introduced officially in 2011 as the so-called third occupation – not faculty nor administrative staff; it is an interface position bridging the gap between researchers on site, industry, governmental structures, and university management. URAs provide diverse insights and support the decision-making processes of university management. The URA Center was established in 2013 after Tohoku University was selected to be one of 22 universities of the “Program for Promoting the Enhancement of Research Universities” with an increasing involvement in university wide activities. It started out with a group of under 10. Today, Tohoku University counts 78 URAs, also including URA related roles, not only in main administration, but also in many departments and research institutions. There are now 1,459 reported URAs in Japan as of March 2019, with numbers still growing steadily. Although URA staff consists mostly of Japanese, we see an increasing number of international URAs. URAs have become an essential part of the university research management system in Japan.

But changes on the personnel side are not enough to support the evolving research landscape. The whole infrastructure needs an overhaul. Traditionally, Japanese official documents create a hurdle when employing new faculty, reception centers specialized in expatriate management, and learning centers providing writing support in close collaboration with library staff are only a couple of ways to combat these challenges. At Tohoku University, we also provide all university members with access to abstract and citation databases as well as with related analysis tools. This enables administrative staff, faculty, and students alike to have a look at the variety of metrics to further promote collaboration, PR, and societal impact. Transparency is in our view also an important factor toward inclusion.
The Tohoku University Center for Gender Equality Promotion (TUMUG: Tohoku University, Movement, United, Gender), established in 2014, has played an important and leading role in the promotion of diversity and inclusion at Tohoku University. Since the establishment of the Gender Equality Committee, the parent body of TUMUG, in 2001, the University has been working to raise awareness of gender equality and to support the development of female researchers from the perspective of promoting women’s participation first and foremost, while understanding that the promotion of diversity is not just for “women.” For example, due to the lack of “rikejo” (female students and researchers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) fields), the Science Angel program was established in 2006 to promote the attraction of science to elementary, junior high and high school students, and to foster the next generation of researchers through the role models they have access to. In addition, the “Morinomiyako Women’s Hurding Project” (run for three years from 2006), the “Morinomiyako Leading Women’s Jump-up Project for 2013” (run for five years from 2009), which were both supported by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and from 2016, the “Morinomiyako Project for Empowering Women in Research” have been implemented under the MEXT Initiative for Realizing Diversity in the Research Environment program. In 2013, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of its admission of the first female students to a national university in Japan, the university formulated the “Action Guidelines for the Promotion of Gender Equality” and has been working to improve the support and environment for gender equality with seven guidelines: 1) Create environments that support a work-life balance, 2) Nurture female leadership, 3) Support for the next generation of female students, 4) An awards system, 5) Support for regional collaborations, 6) Support for internationalization, and 7) Development of a strategic framework to promote gender equality. The results of these activities have been significant, and the proportion of female researchers and faculty members in the University has been on the rise. In terms of the University’s board members, the first female vice president was appointed in 2018, and two women were appointed to the positions of executive vice president and vice president in 2020. In 2017, Tohoku University was selected as one of the first three designated national universities by the Japanese government in recognition of the university’s abilities

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Striving for Inclusion in Remote Work

Research Administration is adjusting to a long-term shift to remote work, and the associated changes and challenges that this brings. We must adjust our approach to this “new normal,” to create and reinforce a supportive environment focused on innovation and inclusion.

1. Environment - Create an environment that encourages making suggestions about modifying processes, integrating technology, and innovating. These ideas can come from staff at any level. Take the opportunity to become more open to innovation from anywhere.

2. Un-teach “fake it, to make it” - Encourage staff to ask for support and training as needed. Be clear that it is ok to not know and encourage them to ask questions and communicate needs as they arise. Ensure that they understand that part of inclusion is ensuring that everyone can work from home, and particularly engage with technology. Be mindful that the technology itself may be where some need training or support.

3. Culture - Create a work culture where hours can be adjusted as needed, but also switched off when necessary. This new normal can lead to feeling like you are “at work” all the time due to a lack of physical separation, and cause burnout which is especially important to watch for and avoid. Since this extended period of working remotely was precipitated by a health crisis, it has increased caregiving and family needs for many, and it is important to include everyone in adjusting norms and support staff as they try to separate work and home life.

The key for all teams is continuous communication, compassion, and supporting each other during this time. Engage in the expertise among each other. Leverage the technical generational divide between and within research administrators, to support growth, learning, and innovation—especially with technology. Encourage everyone to reach out for support to build connection and community in the new work-from-home environment.

Mario R. Medina, PhD, CRA, currently serves as the Director, Sponsored Projects Administration at the University of Kansas Medical Center where he is responsible for pre, post-award and contract administration. Mario has more than 25 years of experience in research administration. He has served 3 NCURA Regions and has been a presenter and has served on many committees (both regional/ national) as well as served as National Treasurer. He was a recipient of NCURA’s Distinguished Service Award in 2018. He can be reached at mmedina3@kumc.edu

Saiqa Anne Qureshi, PhD, MBA, is the Contracts and Grants Accounting Analyst Manager at UC SF. She has over ten years of research management experience in both the US and Europe, and is a sought after speaker, trainer, editor and writer. She can be reached at SaiqaAnne.Qureshi@ucsf.edu

The Future

In the wake of the recent global pandemic from COVID-19, Japanese universities are pressed to undertake more rapid changes. The shift from face-to-face communication toward online services provide not only new challenges (e.g. zoom fatigue and isolation), but also new opportunities for societal change. A notion toward a better work-life balance especially in the context of Japan with the stereotype of the company samurais will bring fresh initiatives. Mountains were moved as Tohoku University got rid of the hanko system. Hankos are Japanese stamps that are used instead of handw ritten signatures for all kinds of approval processes – anachronistic to the digital transformation world-wide. Home office or remote work have become quite common in Japan, too. Safety first. Stay safe, stay home, and avoid the three Cs — Closed spaces with poor ventilation, Crowded places with many people nearby, and Close-contact settings such as close-range conversations. These recent changes give a glimpse of what could be possible in the future. The cyber physical realm might provide the means to overcome older concepts of geographical borders and the limitations of mobility, adding new vectors to the concepts of diversity and inclusion.

Closing comment

Around the time Tohoku University was in the process of building up its founding principles, Kaneko Misuzu a famous Japanese female poet wrote in her poem—“The bird, the bell, and me” that everything is different and that such diversity is something amazing, nothing to be afraid of. It is our mission to promote this mindset throughout our daily life/work.

References


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Marc Hansen, specially-appointed assistant professor/University Research Administrator at the Organization for Research Promotion, Tohoku University, Japan, is involved in a variety of activities related to research promotion ranging from the analysis of bibliometric data for informed decision making to the planning of training seminars. He can be reached at hansen.marc.a6@tohoku.ac.jp
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While COVID-19 is a global pandemic, its impact has been starkly different depending on what underlying social and economic issues were pervasive in your experience prior to its emergence around the globe. In the United States, communities of color have borne the brunt of the coronavirus for a multitude of reasons. LGBTQI youth are a vulnerable group with issues related to the impact of the virus and mental health. We find ourselves in an uncomfortable climate where Americans of Asian descent are being targeted for hate crimes according to StopAAPIhate.com.

Black, Latino, and Native American people are nearly three times as likely to be infected with COVID-19 than their White counterparts and about five times as likely to be hospitalized. And across the board people of color are more likely to die of the virus. Public health officials have long known that systemic racism is a public health issue. But the coronavirus pandemic, set against a social and economic pandemic, has magnified the health disparities in these communities.

These sad statistics highlight what epidemiologists have always said, that the effects of race, poverty and systemic disadvantages in populations will...
ultimately result in health outcomes that will end in data presented by the CDC.

Here at the Lundquist Institute for Biomedical Innovations at Harbor UCLA Medical Center, our researchers are addressing some difficult questions. The data tells us the “who.” It also gives us a glimpse into the “why.” Since the emergence of COVID-19, epidemiologists have been tackling these thought-provoking questions to determine the how and to clearly define the conditions that created the “HOW.”

The arrival of COVID-19 has prompted our best researchers from all over the globe to work collaboratively in order to answer the most poignant question in the greatest health challenge of our lifetime. How do we defeat the novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2? As a research administrator, I was pleased to see our investigators instantly shift their focus to join the world’s scientific superheroes in saving humanity from the effects of a very efficient virus that is our common enemy. To accomplish this goal, there had to be a complete understanding that our collective compassion for humanity and our memorialized mutual respect for each other could produce a powerful tool and work expeditiously. We also had to be cognizant of limitations the pandemic, remote work, and social distancing presented. Our best clinical and bench researchers are being required to work with frontline clinicians to find solutions. We all had to make a valiant and equally dedicated commitment to get it done quickly. The cradle-to-grave precision medicine scientific approach was designed to move diagnosis from the emergency room to the research labs for medical discovery and back to the patients for treatment.

The pandemic pushed everyone to find their inner superhero. We had to understand our superpowers so that we could harness them to bring diverse and inclusive ideas and talents to collaborate. Discovering our superpower while mentally transitioning to a model where one could think outside the box, examine it, tear it down again, and rebuild from scratch, if necessary, so that we could get a foundational approach to understanding the mission at hand. This required many meetings to discuss the latest scientific data and review preliminary science. It had to be instantly translated into a narrative to support the scientific hypotheses that were being developed. Proposal development and research business development merged to support our scientific endeavors.

It’s hard to meet a global challenge without the resources to fund research. Our administrative teams, both central and departmental, had to use their superhero powers of collaboration to aid our investigators from concept to funded grant. This partnership of science and administration is the foundation for our success if we are going to produce something that can change the world. Scientists have the power to innovate the unthinkable. Administrators have the ability to harvest those innovations in a manner for consumers to digest and for the world to reap the benefits.

What everyone brought to the collaboration table, whether as an investigator or as a research administrator, had to meet the challenge to produce viable grants that could quickly be transitioned from proposal to production with the ultimate goal of finding a vaccine or treatments based on an understanding of the effects of COVID-19 on populations.

“The Lundquist Institute has delivered life-saving innovations for decades,”
said David Meyer, PhD, President and CEO of The Lundquist Institute. “COVID-19 is the single greatest public health challenge of my lifetime, and we must act fast to find, as well as to do the needed studies to verify a potential treatment such as this.” The mindset of our leadership coupled with our biomedical innovation spark scientific creativity for this challenge. We were ready to do our part and win this war against an unseen enemy.

Our best researchers merged their collective talents to brainstorm how we could make a difference. This think tank of valued ideas expanded to include our colleagues with other institutions in the Los Angeles and Southern California geographic area.

On our campus, The Lundquist Institute began several initiatives to support the fight to defeat COVID-19. One of those initiatives was a randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial sponsored by the National Institutes of Health designed to find out whether hydroxychloroquine and azithromycin reduce hospitalization or death in individuals suffering from COVID-19. A randomized clinical trial is the most effective way to determine if a treatment can safely benefit those suffering from the virus. The Lundquist Institute has an extensive background and history in clinical studies on viruses such as HIV, which is why we were ideally prepared to hit the ground running to do our part to find a vaccine and test new therapeutics. Under the direction of Dr. Eric Darr, The Lundquist Institute was one of the thirty nationwide sites participating over a six-week period.

Dr. Darr is also participating in a Phase 2 clinical trial that will evaluate the safety and therapeutic efficacy of potential new therapeutics for COVID-19, including an investigational therapeutic based on synthetic monoclonal antibodies (mAbs) to treat the virus. Funded by the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, they are working with targeted clinical sites to identify potential patient volunteers currently infected with SARS-CoV-2 who have mild to moderate disease that does not require hospitalization. They will be invited to take an experimental therapy or a placebo as part of a rigorously designed randomized clinical trial. The trial, which is known as ACTIV-2, may also investigate other experimental therapeutics under the same trial protocol at a later date.

Other efforts included establishing rapid testing on campus to track the virus in the Los Angeles area. As a department administrator, I was tasked with conceptualizing a business development plan for, and to comprehensively examine our operation, to determine our maximum impact within our resources. I also had to ensure that our investigators had what they needed to collect preliminary data to support our grant submissions. Further, I had to engage with my industry and vendor contacts to secure SARS-CoV-2 IgG tests to ensure we had a reliable supply chain for emergency authorized reagent kits. This required my entire administrative team to focus on multiple operational fronts to meet the biggest challenge of our lives while working remotely.

Once we discover our power — for either science, administration, or a mixture of both, by leveraging our diverse skills we will have what is needed to heal humanity. Our efforts at my institution over the past several months demonstrate how we can make all the difference in the world by working together.

Derick Jones is the Manager of the Institute of for Translational Genomics and Population Science at The Lundquist Institute for BioMedical Innovations at Harbor UCLA Medical Center. He also serves on the NCURA Board of Directors, chairs the LeadMe Program for Regions VI & VII, serves on the Diversity and Inclusion Presidential Task Force, and a current NCURA Global Fellow. He can be reached at derickjones@lundquist.org

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Judy Fredenberg received the 2020 Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration Award at the 62nd Annual Meeting. This is NCURA’s most prestigious award given to a member who has made a significant contribution to the profession and demonstrated noteworthy service to NCURA. The following are her remarks:

Thank you, Craig, for your kind words. Some were even true! I am so honored to receive this award. I admit that I read the letter notifying me of my selection several times to ensure it was addressed properly. I know that recipients of this honor are the matriarchs and patriarchs of our profession and, in my mind, I certainly don’t fall into that category. But time has passed and with it, knowledge and experience gained. Any success I’ve had has come from standing on the shoulders of those before me as these are the individuals who have modeled the way for all of us to live fully, give selflessly, contribute meaningfully, and laugh often, and I thank them.

Many of us joke that our friends and family don’t really understand what we do as research administrators. So when I’ve shared that I have received the Award for Outstanding Achievement in Research Administration through my global professional association, the response – of course – has been enthusiastic congratulations that is often accompanied by “and what does that mean, exactly?” I’ve begun to explain that the honor is something like a lifetime achievement award. Because everyone seems to have a similar understanding of the phrase “lifetime achievement,” I’ve found myself reflecting as to what that really means.

Lifetime is defined as the duration of a person’s life or a thing’s usefulness. Like many of you, I believe I am, hopefully, still in the midst of my “lifetime” and possess some usefulness. I plan to remain engaged in the profession, connect with friends and family, continue to contribute in what I hope is a meaningful way, and have fun along the way. I love this quote from Brendon Burchard, “Be the person who brings joy, humility, and fun, even as you strive to reach difficult goals and make your difference.”

Make no mistake. What we do is serious stuff and makes a difference. As research administrators, our purpose is to facilitate the success of others. We’re all familiar with the old saying that “Life is too short to take yourself too seriously.” There’s also a second part of this saying that rings true for our community: “If you can’t laugh at yourself, call me and I’ll be happy to laugh at you.” I’m so grateful that many of you have laughed at me, and with me, over the years, and that I can still fit into the earrings I wore in high school.

Achievement is doing something successfully, typically with effort, courage, or skill. Effort, courage, skill – these are words of substance that are fairly easy to understand in the context of research administration. Effort means to work hard; skill is to understand the various ways to apply 2 CFR 200 and other sponsor guidelines; and courage is being able to apply that understanding even when it’s unpopular and reaching out to colleagues for help when it’s needed. I know that last one – asking for help – can be difficult for some of us. I was raised on a ranch with a couple of older kids who wanted nothing more than to ditch me at every opportunity. If I couldn’t keep up, I couldn’t go on whatever adventure was planned. If I couldn’t pull my weight, I had to stay home. While these experiences likely shaped a resilient and independent spirit, they didn’t encourage me to ask for help. Fast forward a few years and here we are at the annual meeting of a profession that so encouraging helping each other that it is included in the tag line: “Supporting research … together.” I have learned that growing and utilizing one’s sphere of influence is fundamental to success in research administration, and that sharing it is where the magic happens.

Years ago, I heard someone refer to human beings, the collective us, as human becomings. The word “becoming” suggests constant evolution, and I believe it is vitally important to be open to new things, meet new people, to listen, to learn, to grow and change. Thus, the concept of human becomings continues to intrigue me. With my preamble bracketing “lifetime achievement,” let me offer a few specific suggestions:

- **Integral:** Strive to ensure your contribution is essential and adds value to your office, your institution, your profession, and advances your personal and professional mission.
- **Instrumental:** Actively contribute to efforts and decisions to influence positive change in your life.
- **Intentional:** Be aware of your contribution. Your words and actions matter, and they impact others, often when you least expect or realize it. Make that impact meaningful, supportive,
and productive, with an eye toward the future.

- **Inclusive:** While some may feel that keeping things close to their vest is a way to maintain control, the reality is that including, encouraging, and empowering others is a sign of strength and leadership.

- **Irrepressible:** Strive to be unrestrained in persistence, positivity, joy. These are some of the things that will make others jump at the opportunity to work with — and for — you.

- **Integrity:** Be honest and truthful in your actions. To quote an old adage, “let your word be your bond.” When you make a mistake, own up to it, even when it’s terrifying. There are few things as valuable as truth and the respect it garners. Years ago, I was involved in a fundraiser for Montana Public Radio. This was back in the day when volunteers clipped and donated coupons that were then attached to products in the grocery store with the note, “The proceeds of this coupon go to support Montana Public Radio.”

  I had been responsible for printing and preparing hundreds of such notes; unfortunately, many were printed with a typo. I’d left out the “L” in “public.” When the manager of a grocery partner contacted us, I was mortified. I wanted to blame someone, anyone, else. But I couldn’t. It was my fault, and mine alone.

Thirty years later, it’s a funny story with a moral or two, the most significant being that if you are employed at a public institution, consider removing the word public without an “L” from your spell check.

  But seriously, folks likely won’t remember most of our mistakes — and, as human becomings, we make many — but they’ll remember how we reacted and responded to move past those mistakes.

- **Intrepid:** Be fearless in your efforts for excellence. Be kind and considerate.

- **Indestructible:** Some days are hard. Bounce back. Twist off the top of each morning with anticipation that you have a whole new day ahead to make a positive impact and advance your personal and professional goals, or recalibrate as needed to adjust your course.

In closing, I wish to again thank my colleagues who nominated me for this honor. I conclude with the phrase I often used at the end of meetings at the University of Montana: “We’re adjourned. Work hard. Be nice. Have fun.”

“Achievement is doing something successfully, typically with effort, courage, or skill.”

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Universities and research institutions are pursuing international research collaborations more and more. Collaborations have been vital in advancing scientific and humanitarian goals. They help create innovations and can contribute to solutions that can eradicate global issues such as life-threatening diseases or increase agricultural productivity. Moreover, collaborations between institutions in different countries have been encouraged by funding agencies to help their mission of supporting research that has a global impact. Additionally, collaboration can help bridge the knowledge gap between countries. One of the many advantages of building partnerships is learning from each other’s knowledge and experience, as many of the scientific advances are simply not going to be made without the work of a diverse set of experts.

Conversely, matching the advantages of collaboration are the challenges that also arise in the process. Cross-cultural communication differences are a critical stumbling block in determining how teams work together. These issues can even extend from small factors such as differences in modes of communication (e.g. email v. phone calls v. video conferencing v. WhatsApp) or time difference challenges. More critically are challenges that emerge due to ethnocentric or historic attitudes such as developing countries are only capable of learning from more developed nations and not vice versa. A collaboration, to be successful, has to be built on mutual respect from both sides and a willingness to learn from each party.

It is important to respect each collaborator’s contribution to a project. This promotes mutual understanding and promotes equitable relationships when working with any partner, especially partners from low to middle income countries. We often only see the tip of the iceberg and below the surface lies many variables derived from: rituals, history, values, beliefs, assumptions, etc. Geert Hofstede’s theory explains the six basic society issues that we need to understand in order to organize our self: Power Distance (High v. Low), Individualism v. Collectivism, Masculinity v. Femininity, Uncertainty Avoidance (High v. Low) and Long-Term Orientation v. Short-Term (Hofstede, n.d.). Hofstede’s work has even produced a comparison tool which can be find here: www.hofstede-insights.com/product/compare-countries.

Unfortunately, unawareness of other person’s cultural differences could pose an inherent risk in the long run, which then can cause the

Table 1. Hofstede’s Cultural Dimension Model (Hofstede, 1991, p.28)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural dimension</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power distance</td>
<td><em>Power distance</em> is the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.</td>
<td>Low: U.S. and Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individualism and collectivism</td>
<td><em>Individualism</em> describes cultures in which the ties between individuals are loose.</td>
<td>Individualistic: U.S., Australia, and Great Britain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Collectivism</em> describes cultures in which people are integrated into strong, cohesive groups that protect individuals in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.</td>
<td>Collectivistic: Singapore, Hong Kong, and Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculinity-femininity</td>
<td><em>Masculinity</em> pertains to cultures in which social gender roles are clearly distinct.</td>
<td>Masculinity: Japan, Austria, and Italy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Femininity</em> describes cultures in which social gender roles overlap.</td>
<td>Femininity: Sweden, Norway, and Netherlands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty avoidance (UAI)</td>
<td><em>Uncertainty avoidance</em> is the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by uncertain or unknown situations.</td>
<td>Low: Singapore, Jamaica, and Denmark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confucian dynamism</td>
<td><em>Confucian dynamism</em> denotes the time orientation of a culture, defined as a continuum with long-term and short-term orientations as its two poles.</td>
<td>High: Greece, Portugal, and Japan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By Fikria El Kaouakibi
A collaboration, to be successful, has to be built on mutual respect from both sides and a willingness to learn from each party.”

project to fail and result in loss of funding. While some institutions have training geared toward teaching international students, little attention is given to research.

Hence, institutions must ensure that adequate training and resources are made available to faculty before they enter a partnership agreement with researchers from other countries. One suggestion is that before embarking in an international research partnership, researchers should be made aware of potential challenges by making it a requirement to attend an ‘Intercultural Communication and Collaboration’ workshop. Attending such events will help researchers understand the diverse communication and leadership styles in cross-cultural collaboration.

Top tips for faculty to be more culturally sensitive:

1. Faculty should research the culture they will collaborate with – where do they fall within Hofstede’s cultural dimensions?
2. Faculty should not assume anything;
3. Listening is important before speaking;
4. Listen not only to what is said, but how it’s said;
5. Consider putting yourself in other person shoes and assume you are from another culture.

Diversity in High-Performance Teams

Each of us aspires to be part of or to manage the best team. What does that take? If you bring together a group of people with specific roles and complementary talent/skills, provide them with a common purpose, allow them to collaborate and innovate, then, they will yield superior results. To achieve this, teams rely on mutual trust, effective communication, continued collaboration, conflict resolution, and decision-making. This is often where challenges arise.

High-performing teams understand and appreciate diversity. They respect different behaviors, personalities, and thinking/work styles. While this diversity is essential, team members must genuinely feel, believe and see that diversity and inclusion are expected, valued and appreciated. For this to occur, leaders must unite employees and demonstrate these values.

In research administration, subject matter expertise is key, but equally important is the ability to build trust, collaboration, communication, and decision-making across the enterprise. NCURA Peer Reviewers examine institutions, organizations, staffing, staff development and other areas. We provide institutions with recommendations for success. These recommendations include:

1. Recruit the best talent pool reflecting all segments of society;
2. Encourage diverse education, experiences and cultural competency;
3. Make everyone feel welcome;
4. Foster a creative and innovative workforce;
5. Promote the sharing of feelings and ideas;
6. Engage in extensive discussion where everyone participates;
7. Acknowledge criticism is constructive and is oriented toward problem-solving;
8. Expect each team member to carry their weight;
9. Require respect of every team member; and
10. Allow leaders to drive results.

The most effective research administration operations employ a diverse team of people who work in a collaborative, supportive and respectful environment. Peer reviewers see the value and benefits of a culture where every voice is welcomed, heard and respected. M

Fikria El Kaouakibi is the Assistant Director of Research at Virginia Commonwealth University School of the Arts in Qatar; she was previously a Senior Research Officer for the school for more than 5 years. She holds a Bachelor’s in Financial and Business Management from the Karel de Grote Hogeschool in Antwerp, Belgium and is working on a Master’s in Research Administration at Johns Hopkins University. She can be reached at felkaouakibi@vcu.edu

References

Jill Frazier Tincher, MBA, CRA, is a member of the Select Committee on Peer Review and an NCURA Distinguished Educator. She has participated in peer reviews and has more than 25 years of research administration experience, spanning pre-award, post-award, central and departmental administration, as well as education and training. She is the Executive Director of Pre and Post Award at The University of Georgia.

Whether you work at a research institution or a predominantly undergraduate institution, the importance of providing quality services to your faculty in support of their research and scholarship is undeniable. NCURA offers a number of programs to assist your research administration operations and to ensure a high-quality infrastructure that supports your faculty and protects the institution.

Please contact NCURA Peer Programs:
NCURA Peer Advisory Services and NCURA Peer Review Program at peerreview@ncura.edu
The mission of NCURA is to advance the profession of research administration through education and professional development. Acting upon the NCURA mission, Region II embarked on a vision to develop the Region II Professional Development Committee (RII-PDC) to deliver professional development workshops to Region II research administrators. The workshops are taught by vetted faculty who provide onsite training in all areas of research administration across a variety of topics such as: the fundamentals of research administration, compliance, financial research administration, contracts, clinical trials, and training grants. These education offerings represent additional opportunities available to Region II membership outside of the training provided at other regional and national meetings.

Embarking on this new journey, Region II began the faculty training process by hosting a two-day mentor-me workshop for RII-PDC faculty and leadership to discuss preparing and delivering useful seminars. During the assembly, participants learned a variety of ways to engage their audiences and create an environment where participants/attendees are welcomed and engaged while simultaneously enhancing their skillset. Through role-playing and learning exercises, attendees received helpful feedback from colleagues and tested new teaching ideas. Once the mentor-me training was completed, Region II-PDC faculty moved forward with their marketing campaign to bring greater awareness of the educational offerings that could be pursued by its membership. Region II networking events allowed for further discussion regarding the RII-PDC educational needs that could be provided to its members. Aside from wanting to ensure the highest caliber of education would be extended which would also be representative of the NCURA brand, the RII-PDC faculty recognized the value and importance of tailoring its educational offerings to member needs, and in rapid response to the ever-changing federal/sponsor rules/regulations.

At a high level, the objectives of each regional workshop are to:

- Provide detailed information that participants will be able to use immediately;
- Focus on current general and specific topics in research and sponsored projects administration; and
- Encourage collaboration among local networks of colleagues.

When an institution is interested in hosting a workshop, they contact the RII-PDC Chair, and from there, the RII-PDC handles all of the behind-the-scenes logistics to ensure a successful event. The institution is assigned a logistical coordinator to take on the responsibility of room assignments, preparing registration forms, ensuring the proper audiovisual needs are present, ordering meals, and providing workshop materials in advance. The focus is to put the administrative burden of hosting a workshop on the RII-PDC and not on the host institution.

Since commencing in 2011, the RII-PDC has delivered more than 50 workshops and partnered with thousands of its members while remaining focused on and committed to supporting the educational needs of its members throughout the region. Region II Chair Katie McKeon shared that “NCURA Region II’s membership has such a wealth of experience in our subject matter experts and our RII-PDC has made it possible for these experts to deliver timely workshops to keep our membership engaged and on the forefront of what is happening in research administration. I cannot wait to see what the future holds for our RII-PDC as we continue to be able to provide these great workshops and be able to offer them to our membership.” As we move forward during these unprecedented times, the current RII-PDC Chair, Tolise Dailey shared that “Building upon the success that Region II achieved over the last several years with their educational programs, this year the RII-PDC implemented strategic initiatives to expand all learning resources. All in-person workshops will be transitioned to a virtual platform, offering free webinars to keep members engaged and the RII-PDC will stay committed to continue to look for opportunities to grow the region continues to evaluate new and innovative ways to extend its educational offerings both virtually and, where possible, in person.”

Whether at the regional or national level, NCURA has many educational opportunities to further the professional development and knowledge base of its entire membership. To obtain information on a Region II-PDC workshop, you may contact the current RII-PDC Chair, Tolise Dailey at tdailey2@jhu.edu, or if interested in the NCURA live virtual workshops you can find information on upcoming offerings at www.ncura.edu/travelingworkshops/UpcomingWorkshops.aspx.

Timothy Schailey, MS, Director, Research Administration and Interim Export Control Officer at Thomas Jefferson University (TJU) in Philadelphia, PA, is a graduate of NCURA’s Executive Leadership Program and a member of its Board of Directors. Tim’s responsibilities at TJU require him to oversee pre-award, non-financial post-award, contracting, outreach and education, and export control activities. He can be reached at timothy.schailey@jefferson.edu

Erin Bailey, MS, CRA, is the Chief Financial Officer for the Clinical and Translational Science Institute, University at Buffalo where she is oversees all research and operations fiscal duties. She is a graduate of the NCURA Leadership Development Institute and the Executive Leadership Program. She has been past Chair and Treasurer for Region II. She can be reached at eedh@buffalo.edu
NCURA's Peer Programs continues to offer both Peer Reviews and Peer Advisory Services despite the current environment, travel difficulties, and restrictions! We are pleased to let you know that we are able to conduct reviews and provide advisory services incorporating virtual site visits. You get the same outside perspective institutions have come to expect from Peer Review: recommendations for the future from fellow research administrators, based on their conversations with your stakeholders and an in-depth review of background materials. Our recommendations, as always, are specific to your institution and its culture, needs, and interests.

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Two months ago, my colleagues and I were asked to write an article on “changing the face of leadership in research administration,” under the assumption that we all could add something new to the conversation. We quickly replied “yes” and began to work on the article, but we soon realized that before we could provide solutions on changing the face of leadership, we first needed to make the case of why change is needed.

Sound the Alarm

“We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency now.” – Martin Luther King Jr.

While institutions create, expand and update their diversity statements as a starting point to drive a cultural shift, those efforts alone will not propel change. Research administrators must summon the courage to have tough conversations with senior leadership within their organizations. They must find strength in their language to lead the charge with their words. It is not what we say but how we convey the message.

Our colleagues, more than ever, need senior leadership to be their champions. They do not have a seat at the table; senior leadership does, and when you are given a seat at the table, you should stand for something. The time is now for leadership to create a culture prioritizing antiracism and bias initiatives. Here are some ways to do so:

• Form taskforces composed of racially diverse representatives around the organizational units charged with identifying areas needing improvement to close the racial divide and making recommendations to leadership.
• Create panel discussions open to anyone at the institution featuring scholars discussing the history of racism and equality issues happening in our country and in the workplace.

• Make resources available for employees to learn about unconscious bias and racial injustice.
• Create new positions and offices dedicated to equity issues who will integrate and work closely with all aspects of the organization.
• Seed grant funding competitions for faculty and/or academic departments to create events, materials, and programming addressing diversity and inclusion.
• Offer a film series with open Q&A and discussions afterwards.

It is what it is

We cannot change what we are not aware of, and once we are aware, we cannot help but change” – Sheryl Sandberg

Institutions of higher education and other organizations that employ research administrators are taking proactive steps to encourage diversity and inclusion in the workplace. However, that is not enough. Institutions must take even more important stances by turning them into policies and procedures that create privileges for all. Look to see what others have implemented at their organizations. As research administrators, we know we do not always have to reinvent the wheel and we can seek guidance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 1: Timeline &amp; Milestones</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2017</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>NCURA’s Diversity and Inclusion Task Force was established to evaluate NCURA’s ability to promote and adopt diversity &amp; inclusion strategies at the national and regional levels of NCURA</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2018</strong></td>
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<td>Task Force charged with developing an implementation plan that included recommended guidelines for national and regional adoption in all aspects of NCURA</td>
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<td><strong>2019</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Task Force charged with implementing the plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Volunteer Matrix</td>
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<td>• Profile Data</td>
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<td>• Regional Adoption of Statement</td>
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<td>• D&amp;I Column established in NCURA Magazine</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2020</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Task Force charged with</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Creating a D&amp;I Collaborate Community</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Designing a virtual career dev. program</td>
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<td>• Developing an organizational climate survey</td>
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assistance from our colleagues. 
In 2017, NCURA created the Diversity & Inclusion Task Force to ensure “Every member of NCURA has a right, without regard to gender, race, ethnicity, age, religion, social class, sexual orientation, ability, personality, functional experience or background, to fair and respectful treatment, equal access to resources to support professional growth, and equitable opportunities to contribute to NCURA’s success.”
Consider these best practices when starting a diversity and inclusion committee in the workplace: give them a timeline to define their goal and objectives; charge them with creating, developing, and implementing change; and empower them with the resources and tools to affect change.

Silence is Compliance

“It only takes one voice at the right pitch, to start an avalanche” — Dianna Hardy
As part of the Juneteenth celebration on June 19, 2020, The New School held a special Research Administration Demonstration (RAD) Series session on “Changing the Face of Leadership.” Stephanie, Tolise and David joined a host of other presenters to discuss career paths in research administration while knowing that people of color tend to be underrepresented in senior executive positions.

The profession of research administration provides many opportunities for members of underrepresented groups to work in the profession, and yet workplace bias along with systemic barriers prevent them from moving into executive roles. Those members of unrepresented groups who do advance to the highest levels of leadership often find that, the farther up the ladder you go, the fewer people like you there are.

As the Juneteenth RAD session discussed, imagine if we all took a serious inward look and analyzed the range of diversity: gender, age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, heritage, culture, geographic location, etc. Within our own workplaces, ponder these questions institutionally, organizationally, individually:
• How many people in your office look like you?
• Are you the only one looks like you in your office? If so, why is that?
• Are you the only one who thinks like you in your office?
• When did you first learn about people of color? Who taught you? A parent? A caregiver? A teacher? What did they say?
• What does inclusion look like to you? How do you know when inclusion has been achieved?
• How have you unintentionally perpetuated systemic racism in a negative way? How have you unintentionally perpetuated systemic racism by not calling for the end of racism?

Then, consider how many people have to leave parts of themselves at the door in order to complete their jobs in the workplace. For members of underrepresented groups, this is significant, and these folks can’t simply come to work to do a job. Instead, they come to work to do a job AND carry a responsibility. As David shared in the RAD session, he’s often been the youngest person and only Southeast Asian among senior leadership. When people ask him how he will deal with others who may have problems with his demographics, he has responded by saying, “I know that it will be a problem for others. I can’t control that. I will just make sure it doesn’t become a problem for me.” This approach is too common for people of color and is very lonely and very difficult to consistently deploy. This approach also hinders long-term sustainability, while highlighting unnecessary extra burdens due to demographics. This highlights a need for change.

Here’s what we do know. Most, if not all, research organizations provide career paths for their employees, yet far too many people of color do not have access to the same roads. Instead, they are given detours. If we want to move forward, we must get rid of the obstacles in their way.

Figure 2: “Baseline Findings”:
NCURA, 23 February 2017
Research Administrators Stepping Toward Solutions Inside Their Own Office

“Diversity is being invited to the party. Inclusion is being asked to dance. Belonging is dancing like no one is watching.” – Verna Myers

One example of not being silent can be found at The New School, in the Provost’s Office of Research Support (ORS). A paradigm shift was made in order to create an environment of civility, respect, and inclusiveness through opportunities for employee engagement. This is an important investment for the future, and workplace satisfaction is meaningful. This is a statement that ORS has been using in employee recruiting, interviewing, hiring, onboarding, and assessing:

ORS aspires to be excellent stewards of our human, intellectual, cultural, financial and environmental resources. ORS enhances and embraces employee engagement, inclusion and diversity; we do our best when working with and learning from those whose experiences and perspectives differ from our own. Ultimately, enhancing the current environment by increasing representation will assist ORS staff to: increase involvement and collaboration; find greater meaning in work; achieve a heightened connection to work, mission and co-workers. This in turn enables ORS to have higher organizational performance.

The idea here is that talent needs to be found, nurtured and developed. The organization focuses on problem solvers and folks with innate desire to help — and when those recurring thoughts/behaviors are present in the workplace, diversity, equity, inclusion and social justice are simply a part of the culture of strivers, thinkers, relaters, who can adapt to what the situational needs are. There is a work output benefit here, too, because great discoveries and social benefits occur when researchers (from all walks of life) have facilitators around them for support.

Another item that ORS has adopted, to not be silent, follows these perspectives from Dafina Lazarus Stewart:

• Diversity: “Who’s in the Room?” Equity: “Who is trying to get in the room, but can’t? Whose presence in the room is under constant threat of erasure?”
• Inclusion: “Have everyone’s ideas been heard?” Justice: “Whose ideas won’t be taken as seriously because they aren’t the majority?”
• Diversity: “How many of [pick any marginalized identity] group do we have this year than last?” Equity: “What conditions have we created that maintain certain groups as the perpetual majority here?”
• Inclusion: “Is this environment safe for everyone to feel like they belong?”
• Justice: “Whose safety is being sacrificed and minimized to allow others to be comfortable maintaining dehumanizing views?”

Whether working on policies, processes, operations, daily interactions, etc., ORS team members are guided with the perspectives above.

... equity, inclusion, and social justice should not just be our principles, but must also be our practices.
“Not everything that is faced can be changed. But nothing can be changed until it is faced.” – James Baldwin

The ORS work above has not been done in a silo; it’s actually part of a larger initiative: ORS has partnered with The New School’s Office of Equity, Inclusion and Social Justice on a Senior Leadership Call to Action to reconcile New School values and practices, in order to advance our shared goal to create a more equitable and inclusive New School community.

The aligned motivations of the two offices provide dynamic synergy to enact change in higher education. As David mentioned in the RAD session, given the totality of national tragedies – fully acknowledging it’s exhausting to keep up with – higher education ought to be committed to taking action and being a part of the solution to face social injustice and prejudice. For David, it’s his desire to be an active participant in the formation of a more perfect union. And, it’s so clearly in our faces - on an almost daily basis - that we are far from a more perfect union, as the recent events continue to remind us that no-one is shielded from sadness. There is no shield from the deep (and disproportionate) shock and outrage in our various communities. What worries David the most, is folks are in fear – fear for their own safety or a loved one’s safety or an uncertain future.

Looking Ahead

“Do we settle for the world as it is, or do we work for the world as it should be?” – Michelle Obama

Now that we have made the case for why change is needed, and provided initiatives on how to implement change, our work is still not done. Initiatives will not succeed until we remove the structural racism and bias roadblocks that exist in the workplace. It can only be done when we all work together to achieve the desired end state: anyone and everyone can be the face of leadership.

Continued work on solutions and a paradigm shift will bring individual and institutional discomfort. There is a harmony and tension between the need for long-term systemic work to create full equity and inclusion and the immediate need to change the daily experience. Every member of our community has a role to play to create a more equitable and inclusive community.

More so than ever, courage is needed.

Instead of saying the comfortable statement: “I don’t know where to start or what to say” - what if we had courage to say, “First I will listen/read/watch. I will speak against injustice.”

Instead of saying the comfortable statement: “I don’t want to get it wrong or get called out” - what if we had courage to say, “I will make mistakes, no doubt about it. I will be grateful for the lesson.”

Instead of saying the comfortable statement: “It won’t make a difference what I do. Nothing is going to change” - what if we had courage to say, “Things happen when I take risks and become part of something bigger.”

Instead of saying the comfortable statement: “I don’t get involved in politics, I don’t have time” - what if we had courage to say, “This is a human rights issue. This matters. I will make time.”

Our ask to you: What will you do? Will you be courageous and take action to change the face of leadership?

One first step in this partnership – to avoid silence – was to start sharing with those who are hurting: we see you, we hear you, but most importantly, we stand with you.

As Melanie Hart, Senior Vice President for Equity, Inclusion, and Social Justice and Chief Diversity Officer at the New School, writes, “This approach fully acknowledges now is a time when there is great uncertainty, fear, and exhaustion in our individual lives, in our community, in our country, and the world. There is profound economic, political, and social uncertainty that for many unsets one’s sense of security, community, and one’s place in society. For others, there has never been a sense of security or an equitable position in society to lose. Trauma and uncertainty don’t equalize; rather, they exacerbate and call us to show our true character.”

Another loud action was to commit to values and have matching actions that work to build a more inclusive, equitable and socially just environment. Higher education has a natural platform to speak out against racism and injustice, condemn police brutality, and demand change in the prison system (and education and housing systems). Higher education has existing spaces for promoting healing; advancing the power of wonder, restoration and hope; and driving toward a modernized, civil society. Higher education has a responsibility to listen to our students, colleagues, community; stand; find words; have a voice to be heard; and take action.

As Melanie Hart notes, “As you know, we are in the midst of a reimagining process to envision and secure our institution’s sustainability and vitality. This work, while challenging and unprecedented, also offers an opportunity for innovation and alignment fueled by our core values and long-held principles of equity, inclusion, and social justice. There are a myriad of risks in continuing business as usual, not least of which is continuing policies and practices that don’t serve our greatest good. I would also offer that equity, inclusion, and social justice should not just be our principles, but must also be our practices.”

An exciting project has been launched from this partnership. Work has begun to create a succession plan or pipeline for genuine leadership growth and development of ORS employees with a focus on equity, inclusion and social justice. This work recognizes of the importance of changing the face of leadership and its complexities. This work formulates initial ideas on how to address and first steps towards appropriate and resilient succession and promotion plans that account for equity, inclusion and social justice concerns.

Looking Ahead

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These are uncertain and challenging times, not only for us but for our institutions as well. The situation in the United States is changing rapidly. I welcome the stability of NCURA and the region through the turbulence. The creativity and reimagining of networking and educational opportunities is amazing.

The virtual “Annual Meeting” was a great success and thanks the entire NCURA staff, our regional officers and members who worked tirelessly. Thanks to Geraldine Pierre, BVARI and the Volunteer and Membership committee for organizing the virtual happy hour following the business meeting.

I am thrilled to announce that Ben Prince, UMass Medical received the Julia Jacobson Distinguished Service Award! Congratulations Ben on this well-deserved honor.

2021 Election Results:
Chair-Elect: Sonya Stern, University of Vermont
Treasurer-Elect: Steve Hoffman, Steward Health Care
Secretary-Elect: Lisa Mosley, Yale University

Congratulations to our newly elected Region I Officers! Thank you to Stacy Riseman, Chair, College of the Holy Cross, and the Governance Committee for putting together an outstanding slate of candidates.

The Curriculum Committee, under the leadership of Jill Mortali, Dartmouth College, did a great job in hosting a summer chat series — a welcome opportunity to connect with new colleagues.

Our virtual Regional Annual Meeting will take place November 16-17. As I write this in September, we have great plans for this mini conference. I hope you plan to attend! Thanks to everyone for helping us pull this together.

Louise Griffin is the Chair of Region I and serves as Senior Director of Research and Sponsored Programs Administration at the University of New Hampshire. She can be reached at louise.griffin@unh.edu

Happy fall Region II! I feel like we blinked and the summer was over. I know that some, if not all of us, continue to work under different conditions and challenges, but research administrators are a diverse group of people who can navigate through even the most difficult challenges. Some ways that we can navigate through these difficult times is to try and learn/network as we once did pre-pandemic. The Annual Meeting was a great opportunity to learn and network all wrapped up into one great virtual conference. Region II was able to offer travel awards to the Annual Meeting and we received many applications from our members. Region II was able to award 5 travel awards. Congratulations to Zach Byrnes, University of Pittsburgh; Shawna Campbell, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute; Tiffany Drumgoole, Rochester Institute of Technology; Chad League, MedStar Health Research Institute; and Charlene Werner, University of Maryland. We hope that you enjoyed the conference!

I am happy to report that our first free virtual webinar was held on September 29. The topic was Pre and Post Award Administration plus Financial Responsibilities. A big thank you to our speakers Danielle Brown, University of Maryland, Baltimore; Catherine Parker, University of Maryland; and Jaquion Gholston, Stevens Institute of Technology, for putting together such a great webinar. The Professional Development Committee (PDC) continues to work hard to schedule more free webinars before the end of the year. Please be on the lookout for these dates to take advantage of these webinars. If you have any topic ideas you are interested in learning about or if you would like to teach a webinar, please contact the PDC Chair, Tolise Dailey at tdailey2@jhu.edu

We do have good news to report regarding our Fall Regional Meeting. We have secured the dates of October 17–21, 2021, at the Hotel DuPont in Wilmington, Delaware. A big thank you to our treasurer, Lamar Oglesby and Program Committee Chair Sandy Collier who worked very hard to reschedule and make the best decisions for our membership. We will look forward to the future and restart planning from where our committee left off in early spring 2021.

I hope everyone enjoys the fall season and finds time to relax and recharge! Stay safe!

Katie McKeon is the Chair of Region II and serves as an Assistant Director in the Office of Research Administration at the University of Maryland, College Park. She can be reached at kpetrone@umd.edu

Katie McKeon is the Chair of Region II and serves as an Assistant Director in the Office of Research Administration at the University of Maryland, College Park. She can be reached at kpetrone@umd.edu
Happy fall to our flamingo family! We hope that all our members and their friends, families, and communities are safe and healthy. While “Back to School” looks different this year, we are happy to have our NCURA colleagues to lean on as we navigate this unprecedented territory.

Region III is excited to announce the formation of a standing committee for Diversity & Inclusion, led by Laneika Musalini (Tri County Technical College). See the Inclusion Initiatives feature for more information!

We’d like to thank the NCURA staff and AM62 program committee for putting together an inspiring virtual conference. Region III had 443 attendees, including 39 new members. Special thanks to honorary flamingo Holly Anderson, who helped coordinate our virtual business meeting and new member welcome event. Three Region III members served on the program committee for this year’s meeting:

- Pre-Award: Marc Haon (University of South Carolina)
- Research Compliance & Ethics: Carpentato “Tanta” Myles (University of Alabama)
- Poster Sessions: David Smelser (University of Tennessee)

We would also like to congratulate Rashonda Harris (Emory University) and Jill Tincher (UGA), who were recognized with the Julia Jacobsen Distinguished Service award. Jill also received NCURA’s Distinguished Educator designation this year.

With AM62 complete, we shift our focus to Region III’s Spring 2021 Meeting at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside in New Orleans, LA. The meeting will be held April 26-28, 2021, with pre-conference workshops on April 24-25. Next year marks Region III’s 50th anniversary, and the theme is “Milestones: Celebrating Growth and Progress in Research Administration.” We hope you can join us in the Big Easy!

Finally, we are excited to share the results of our 2021 elections. We thank all our candidates for their service to the region and congratulate our incoming Chair-Elect Natasha Williams (Kennesaw State University) and our new Regionally-Elected National Board Member David Smelser (University of Tennessee). We also welcome our new committee coordinators for 2021:

- Nominations & Elections: Allison Krauss, Western Carolina University
- New Member: Lauren Swindell, Georgia Institute of Technology
- Public Relations: Jessica Parker, Auburn University
- Sponsorship: Candice Ferguson, Georgia State University
- Website: Kelly Millsaps, University of North Georgia

Did AM62 inspire you to lend a hand to help your flock? Fill out our volunteer survey (http://ncuraregioniii.com/volunteer) to be connected with a committee coordinator. Until next time, stay in touch by following Region III on Facebook and Instagram or joining the RIII Collaborate Community.

Kathleen Halley-Octa is Region III Secretary and serves as Director, Office of Research & Sponsored Projects in the College of Education and Human Development at Georgia State University. She can be reached at khalley1@gsu.edu

Hello Region IV and Happy Fall! We hope everyone is well and healthy. We have several important updates to share, and as always, you can find additional up-to-date information on the Region IV website, www.ncuraregioniv.com.

Run for the Region IV Board! We are encouraging candidates for the following positions: Chair-Elect, Regionally Elected Member to the National Board, and two (2) At-Large members. Visit our website to learn more about how you can nominate someone or yourself to run for the Region IV Board. Serving on the Board is a great way to get more involved in NCURA on both the regional and national level. Feel free to reach out to any of the current board members for more information.

Region IV on the National Level: Many Region IV members are represented within the national organization. Shannon Sutton from Western Illinois University is a member of the NCURA Board of Directors. Diane Hillebrand, University of North Dakota, serves as Chair of the Professional Development Committee (PDC). Other Region IV members are active on several national committees as well. We also want to recognize Jennifer Rodis, University of Wisconsin – Madison, for serving as Co-Chair of NCURA AM62. Thank you, Jennifer for your effort to make the first virtual Annual Meeting a success!

Region IV Spring Meeting: Lastly, join us in Minneapolis, Minnesota, for the 2021 Spring Meeting, “Legends, Lessons, and Leadership!” Mark your calendars for April 25–28, 2021. The meeting will be held at the Minneapolis Marriott City Center. We are all legends and leaders in our own right, and we all have lessons to learn and to share. We look forward to seeing you and learning together in Minneapolis!

Matt Richter, JD, MA, is the Chair of Region IV and serves as Manager of Research Compliance at the Medical College of Wisconsin. He can be reached at mrichter@mcw.edu
The Mustang Mentoring Program is in full swing. In August, they kicked off the five leadership practices with guest speaker, Tony Ventimiglia of Auburn University, and past President of NCURA who presented his views on Model the Way. Jennifer Bindel of University of Texas at Austin was the mentee presenter for this month who shared her values, and how as a leader she has helped to Model the Way. Coming up in September, we look forward to Sam Westcott of California Institute of Technology and NCURA Distinguished Educator, as the guest speaker for Inspire a Shared Vision. To learn more about the program, please visit Region V Mustang Mentoring Program.

Region V is forming new selection committees for the 2021 Travel Awards and Distinguished Service Award. Each of these committees requires three or more members to serve for a term of approximately six months. As a member of one of these committees, you’ll help to prepare the call for nominations, review applications, and make recommendations for awards. The majority of the work will take place between the months of December through March, and we anticipate the time necessary to serve on one of these committees is approximately 15-20 hours. Please contact Immediate Past Chair Katie Plum at katie.plum@angelo.edu if you’re interested in serving on one of these committees or to request more information.

Tribbie Grimm, Chair-Elect and the program committee are busy planning a great 2021 Spring Meeting. Thank you all who participated in our survey to help us plan. If you have any concerns/comments about or want to be on the program committee for the Spring Meeting, please contact Tribbie at tgrimm@tamu.edu.

Becky Castillo is the Chair of Region V and serves as Manager, Post Award Funding at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. She can be reached at Bcastillo@mdanderson.org

Registration for the fall 2020 Regional meeting November 17-19, 2020 from 8 am - 1 pm Hawaii; 9 am - 2 pm Alaska; 11 am - 4 pm Pacific; 12 pm - 5 pm Mountain.

Thank you to our program committee we have sessions for all six tracks - Departmental/PUI, Compliance/Updates, Pre-Award, Post-Award, Contracting, and Human Capital. Registration and the program descriptions can be found at our website - www.ncuraregionvi.org. In order to make the meeting accessible to as many people (members and non-members) as possible, registration is $50 until October 23, 2020 and then $75 until November 10, 2020. Due to the need to ensure all registrants receive the login information and set up, we will not be accepting registrations after November 10. We will have registration/information and tech support “desks” available for your needs. We look forward to seeing you in November!

We understand many institutions have frozen funds for professional development. Therefore, we have made the commitment to fund a number of registration awards for RM2020. Our Awards & Recognition Chair has worked on the call for nominees for the Recognition Awards – and updated the application for the registration awards. Please see our website for criteria and further details.

I would like to congratulate and welcome our new officers for 2021:
- Chair-Elect: Theresa Caban, Lundquist Institute for Biomedical Innovation at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center
- Treasurer-Elect: Vanessa Azevedo, University of California, Merced
- Secretary-Elect: Carrie Chesbro, University of Oregon
- Regional Advisory Committee At-Large Member: Patrick Lennon, University of Washington
- Region VI Representative to the NCURA National Board of Directors: Nancy Lewis, University of California, Irvine

Again, thank you to our Program/Logistics Committee for RM2020 from Region VI - Pre-Award – Jackie Lucas; Compliance/Updates – Laura Register; Human Capital – Saira Ann Quereshi; Contracts – Noam Pines; Departmental/PUI – Megan Dietrich and Sarah Bricknell; Marketing – Csilla Csaplar; Volunteers – Mich Pane and Lisa Wotruch as well as our colleagues in Region VII. This year’s regional meeting is a new experience for us and with their hard work and dedication, we can bring you RM2020 in November.

Stay safe, stay healthy and we will see you in November!

Vanessa Quiroz Hotz, MPA, CRA, is Region VI Chair and Assistant Director for Finance at the Washington National Primate Research Center at the University of Washington. She can be reached at vqmh@uw.edu
What an impressive virtual annual meeting this year! A BIG thank you to the twenty presenters we had from Region VII at AM62 who all contributed to the success of this year’s meeting.

In other exciting news, the Region VI/VII 2020 Regional Meeting will now be held completely virtual from November 17 – 19, 2020. We have a wonderful Program and Logistics Committee working hard to put together a condensed, highly pertinent program. If you are interested in volunteering virtually for AM2020, please contact Alexa Van Dalsen at alexa.vandalsem@colorado.edu. The Region VII All Member Business Meeting will be open to ALL Region VII Members during AM2020 and you are welcome and encouraged to attend! Details will be sent out separately.

It is with great excitement that I announce our newest members of the NCURA Region VII executive committee (term beginning January 2021):

- Chair-Elect: Natalie Buys, University of Colorado, Anschutz Medical Campus
- Treasurer-Elect: Jason Papka, Arizona State University
- Member-at-Large: Lisa Allen, Arizona State University
- Regionally-Elected Member of the Board: Vincent Borleske, University of Arizona

Thank you so much to all those who were on our ballot in this election. You are all remarkable members of our region and your willingness to participate in the leadership is valued!

Stay up on the latest news in our region and on our Regional Meeting via the Region VII website. And don’t forget to check out the educational offerings and resources from the Region VII PEDC! Hope to see you all at AM2020 in this new conference format!

Ashley Stahle is the Chair of Region VII and serves as Assistant Director of Sponsored Programs, Director of Post-Award at Colorado State University. She can be reached at ashley.stahle@colostate.edu

Hola! Ciao! Hello, colleagues around the globe! What a year it has been. The current pandemic has pushed us to adapt and innovate at a fast pace; many of us certainly did not use video communication tools such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams frequently. Six months later, you may consider yourself a master (or at least off your training wheels) at navigating these tools and have sat through multiple virtual meetings. This year the AM62 meeting was no exception to this format. The first AM meeting to be held virtually — thanks to these platforms and the fantastic, dedicated NCURA team for hosting the virtual event, which allow us to engage with colleague far and near at a click of a button.

This meeting was my first, and while it was not in the usual in-person gathering I enjoyed having access to it all from my living room in Sydney: entering the “conference lobby”, browsing the on-demand videos and listen to the presentations anytime, stopping by the exhibition hall to look at the e-posters, visiting the “booths” and downloading resources (reducing paper waste — thank you!). The dedicated Tokyo time zone for international folks allowed us to participate in live Q&A. The live Q&As were lively discussions, held with a virtual coffee/tea enabling us to share knowledge and experiences from all parts of the globe and still be able to network and ask questions. A special shout-out to Claire Chen, NCURA Director, Global Initiatives for joining us during the live Q&A sessions from DC at 2 am.

Finally, our Regional Business Meeting led by our chair, Tadashi Sugihara and international networking event led by our Chair-Elect, Bruno Woeran was held on 12th August. During the meeting, we shared ongoing regional initiatives and introduced the “Ambassador Program,” which the Executive Committee has discussed. The Ambassadors will be our region’s volunteers to initiate and facilitate communications among members in subregions, which will be determined by proximity in geography and time zone. Want to get involved? Please reach out to any member of the Executive Committee.

There’s not enough room here to go through the activities, so please don’t forget to read our e-blast which went out to all region VIII members about our activities on 7th August.

Elly Pineda is Volunteer Coordinator for Region VIII and is the International Research Grants Manager in the Research Office at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), Australia. She can be reached at elly.pineda@uts.edu.au
Do you have Your Copy of our Uniform Guidance desk reference?

Contents Overview

Subpart A – Acronyms and Definitions
Subpart B – General Provisions
Subpart C – Pre-Federal Award Requirements and Contents of Federal Awards
Subpart D – Post-Federal Award Requirements
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Appendix I to Part 200 – Full Text of Notice of Funding Opportunity
Appendix III to Part 200 – Indirect (F&A) Costs Identification and Assignment, and Rate Determination for Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs)
Appendix IV to Part 200 – Indirect (F&A) Costs Identification and Assignment, and Rate Determination for Nonprofit Organizations
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Preamble to the Uniform Guidance (Published in Federal Register/ Vol. 78, No. 248/Thursday, December 26, 2013, 78590-78608)
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Identifying and Addressing Bias in the NIH Peer Review Process to Increase Diversity of Awardees

By Gina Della Porta

In the National Institutes of Health (NIH) grant peer review process, groups of experienced researchers read, score, and discuss grant proposals based on a prescribed set of review criteria. The goal of this process is to fund the most promising, potentially impactful research, with the greatest possibility of advancing knowledge and improving health. Although the peer review process is highly structured, recent studies have shown it may be affected by reviewer implicit bias. Implicit bias refers to stereotypes or attitudes that may unconsciously affect decision making; during peer review, this could impact the scoring and discussion process.

The Current Landscape of Funding by Race, Ethnicity, and Gender

NIH research funding continues to be plagued by disparities in gender, race, and ethnicity. A 2019 study of first-time NIH awards from 2006-2017 showed that women received significantly lower funding amounts than men (Oliveira, Ma, Woodruff, & Uzzi, 2019). This disparity places women at a disadvantage at a critical time in their research careers as they begin to build laboratories and research programs. A 2011 study of NIH investigator-initiated grant awards found that applicants of Asian descent were four percentage points less likely to receive funding and Black or African-American applicants were 13 percentage points less likely to receive funding. When adjusted for factors such as publication record and educational background, the Black or African American applicants were still 10 percentage points less likely to receive funding (Ginther et al., 2011).

NIH Taking Steps to Address Bias in Peer Review and Increase Diversity of Funded Researchers

Since the publication of these and other studies of disparities in funding rates, NIH has taken steps to address bias in the peer review process. In November of 2019, NIH released an updated diversity statement, NOT-OD-20-031, which highlights current underrepresented groups in the sciences and outlines the NIH commitment to increasing diversity. When the NIH Director’s Transformative Research Award funding opportunity, RFA-RM-20-013, was released in May of 2020, it included special instructions stating, “Towards the objective of funding the best possible science, the Office of Strategic Coordination and the Center for Scientific Review are piloting a process for initial peer review of applications received in response to this FOA in which the identity of the investigators and institutions are withheld until the last phase of review.” Applicants to this opportunity are instructed to anonymize portions of their applications, including the Specific Aims and Research Strategy Sections, to minimize potential impacts of bias on peer review. Reviewers will not be able to access the names or institutions of applicants during the initial rounds of the review process, which will focus on the anonymized Specific Aims and Research Strategy sections. Only after the priority applications have been identified for discussion will the peer review panel be able to access and discuss the full details of each application. This process ensures that applications are prioritized for review based solely on the merits of the science and proposed methods, without regard for individual characteristics or institutions.

Although the trial NIH anonymized process will help minimize bias in the initial rounds of application review, the system is not perfect. The review discussion will leave open the opportunity for bias, as reviewers will approach the discussion with full knowledge of the applicant and institution. Additionally, some highly focused disciplines have small pools of researchers, thus making certain teams or individuals easier to identify. NIH is on the right path, but effort should be made to further mitigate potential impacts of reviewer bias on outcomes for underrepresented groups in the sciences.

Other Considerations for Minimizing Reviewer Bias

While NIH continues to take steps to address bias in peer review at the process level, there are steps individuals can take to minimize potential for bias in the review of their applications. One area of focus is the NIH biographical sketch, also known as the biosketch. Several years ago, NIH modified the biosketch personal statement to allow applicants to explain breaks in their training or research for personal reasons that may have impacted their productivity. Although it is helpful to provide explanation for issues of potential reviewer concern such as lapses in publishing, the addition of information on family and personal obligations may also bias the review process. Does a reviewer need to know that a female applicant took time off for maternity leave and gave birth to three children? Perhaps that reviewer could then (consciously or unconsciously) believe she is less focused on research due to balancing a career and a family. A more prudent approach would be for the individual to state that she took time off due to family caregiving obligations, with no further explanation. Similarly, applicants may be advised not to highlight activities on the biosketch that are political in nature or that reveal an individual’s race or ethnicity.

Summary

All humans display unconscious bias, and it is unlikely that any review process will be completely devoid of bias. However, NIH is piloting one potential solution to the problem of disparities in grant funding for underrepresented groups in the sciences. It is important for the issue of bias in peer review to continue to be raised and for creative solutions to be developed.

References


Gina Della Porta, DHSc, MHS, Director of Research at the Yale University School of Nursing, has almost two decades of experience in pre-award research administration and research development. She previously served in research leadership roles at Duke University, where she completed coursework in the Duke Health Disparities Research Curriculum (DHRC) program, and at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Gina can be reached at gina.dellaporta@yale.edu
Seattle University ADVANCE: Institutional Diversity Requires Recognizing and Rewarding Faculty Hidden Work

Seattle University (SU) is a comprehensive, liberal arts university, founded in the Jesuit tradition of education of the whole person and social justice leadership. SU is characteristic of many institutions of higher education in categorizing faculty work and careers into three “buckets”: scholarship, teaching, and service. Historically, despite it being integral to the functioning of the university, work in the “service” bucket has been systemically undervalued and poorly assessed. This “hidden work,” which encompasses many aspects of teaching, is disproportionately done by women and faculty of color.

Many institutions of higher education currently face intense pressure to diversify their faculty populations. A diverse faculty will enable institutions to excel in the face of current challenges ranging from diversifying student populations, shrinking budgets, a worldwide pandemic, and a persistent need to articulate the relevance of the academy to the general public.1 Many institutions of higher education are not, however, tackling diversity from a perspective of structural and cultural transformation. Faculty may be diverse in their scholarship, pedagogy, or identities but current practices require them to organize their careers around traditional evaluation and reward systems that disavow this diversity. The result is not good for anyone: many faculty report that they feel they must be “triathletes,” excelling in teaching, scholarship, and service at all times. The results are also inequitable: women faculty and faculty of color report heavier institutional asks around under-valued teaching and service work.5

In 2016, Seattle University received a National Science Foundation ADVANCE-IT grant. The goal of SU ADVANCE is structural and cultural transformation that aligns faculty expectations and promotion standards with our educational mission. Our research indicates that many faculty choose to work at SU precisely because of its articulated mission of academic excellence and its emphasis on public and community engagement and the education of the whole person. At the same time, faculty consistently expressed concerns about the ways in which mission-aligned work is counted (or not), as well as the ways in which dedication to the institution is used but not rewarded. Work-life balance tensions have further heightened with the “collapse of the professional into the personal” (quoting a faculty), as a result of the new demands created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addressing this misalignment, SU ADVANCE is focused on two intertwined streams of cultural transformation: the revision of the university guidelines for promotion to full professor and the creation of systemic mentoring and faculty development opportunities. Our draft of the proposed revised guidelines for promotion to full professor rests on broadening definitions of faculty activities, to make the guidelines inclusive of diverse types of faculty work, recognizing faculty contributions as integrated and holistic. Concurrently, our work focuses on providing training for administrators in mentoring faculty and for faculty in integrating their professional contributions around work they find meaningful. In the words of one Seattle University administrator, this is simply a “better use of human resources.” It is also part of building a more truly inclusive institution.

References


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- Foreign Influence Requirements Roundup: Agency by Agency Current Expectations Plus a Sneak Peek at What We Think is Coming  
  On Demand

- Subawards and Subrecipient Monitoring  
  On Demand

LIVE VIRTUAL WORKSHOPS

- Contract Negotiation and Administration Workshop  
  November 9 – 12, 2020 
  1:00 – 5:00 pm ET daily

- Financial Research Administration Workshop  
  October 26 – 29, 2020  
  November 16 – 19, 2020 
  1:00 – 5:00 pm ET daily

- Departmental Research Administration Workshop  
  November 17 – 20, 2020 
  1:00 – 5:00 pm ET daily

- Level I: Fundamentals of Sponsored Project Administration Workshop  
  December 1 – 4, 2020 
  1:00 – 5:00 pm ET daily

- An Auditor’s Guide to Research Administration Workshop  
  December 1 – 4, 2020 
  1:00 – 5:00 pm ET daily

- Level II: Sponsored Project Administration Workshop  
  December 7 – 10, 2020 
  1:00 – 5:00 pm ET daily

REGIONAL MEETINGS

Region I (New England)  
November 16-17, 2020..........................Virtual

Region VI (Western)/Region VII (Rocky Mountain)  
November 17-19, 2020..........................Virtual

ONLINE TUTORIALS – 10 week programs

- A Primer on Clinical Trials
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NATIONAL MEETINGS

Virtual Financial Research Administration Conference.................................March 15-17, 2021
Virtual Workshops ..................................................March 18 & 22, 2021
Virtual Pre-Award Research Administration Conference ..........................March 23-25, 2021

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