VCR EDI
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan

Mission: The Research Affairs EDI Committee strives to advance the UC San Diego research enterprise by embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion practices and values at the core of everything we do. We are committed to giving voice to our community, enhancing and celebrating our diversity and fostering a culture of inclusive excellence.

Vision: We aspire to create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace where all are welcome and valued, are comfortable bringing their authentic selves, and have the opportunity, resources and support to thrive.

Strategic Goals:

- **Access & Success** – Attract, retain, develop, and empower diverse talent.
- **Climate** – Create and foster an inclusive climate where all feel welcomed and safe.
- **Accountability** – Ensure VCR’s sustainable accountability for EDI advancement.

Background: Recent events and the Black Lives Matter movement have brought mainstream awareness to the social injustices that stem from systemic racism and the need for change. We cannot remain idle and endorse the status quo, but instead must act in order to achieve equity and diversity. Our objective is to create a diverse and inclusive community by actively countering structural racism that has been enforced by inequitable systems.

Approach: Our strategic approach was to survey VCR staff to gauge their EDI concerns and develop a set of recommendations based on feedback from staff. Our initial action was to review the VCR EDI staff survey and VCR staff polls from the September 23rd VCR EDI town hall. From the data, we learned that VCR staff prioritized EDI concerns as follows: 1) Hiring and recruitment, 2) Advancement, and 3) Culture. From this, the committee developed and voted on recommendations to help address staff concerns in each area.

To ensure staff voices are heard, the committee conducted a second staff survey that encompassed the recommendations put forth by the committee. Based on those findings, our committee recommends to VCR the following:

**FY21 Strategic Objectives:**

1. **Hiring and Recruitment** - Improve Equity, Diversity and Inclusive hiring practices in VCR.
2. **Advancement** - Create an EDI-centric and transparent pipeline for VCR career advancement.
3. **Culture** - Celebrate / prioritize culture and diversity to strengthen VCR's culture and climate.

**Objective 1: Improve EDI hiring practices in VCR.**

**Timeline: 12 Months**

**Tactics:**

1. Integrate EDI-centric values to all JDs.
2. Assess future JD requirements to prevent inadvertent exclusion of otherwise qualified candidates, especially underrepresented groups.
3. Require screening and interview panel members to complete UC's Implicit Bias training series.
4. Encourage formation of diverse screening and interview panels for future recruitments, allowing panel members from other departments to participate as needed.
5. Ensure Research Affairs HR review interview questions before all interviews are initiated (to ensure that questions are appropriately job-related and without bias).

**Objective 2: EDI-centric/transparent career advancement pipeline**

**Timeline:** 12 Months

**Tactics:**

1. Promote stress reduction and work/life balance, acknowledging inequities could be at play.
2. Make professional development funding equitably accessible to all staff regardless of their classification across VCR to prevent disadvantaging staff due to their classification status.
3. Ensure equitable access to professional development opportunities.
4. Ensure awareness of all Research Affairs staff of available opportunities.
5. Incorporate EDI employee engagement/focus in employee performance appraisal process.

**Objective 3: Celebrate/prioritize cultural awareness.**

**Timeline:** 6 Months

**Tactics:**

1. Acknowledge and celebrate heritage and other identity-based months through VCR calendar, newsletter and staff email notices, including considerations for a VCR diversity day celebration.
2. Create and monitor an anonymous mechanism for continuous feedback loop from staff to provide ideas or identify issues to be addressed.
3. Create and manage the VCR EDI Committee website providing specifics on EDI objectives, and EDI campus resources.
4. Include EDI language on all relevant program pages.
5. Offer anti-racism trainings, allocating funding to bring in outside experts to deliver regular trainings and conduct work climate/culture assessments with a view toward continuous improvement.
6. Hold VCR-hosted EDI town halls to disseminate information on VCR budget, how decisions are made, and timely issues being addressed by VCR leadership. As appropriate, include federal contacts or partners to speak on the same issues (budget, policy, etc.) and decisions being made about EDI as it relates to the research enterprise.
## Strategic Objectives

### Objective 1 - Hiring and Recruitment

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<th>Tactical Step</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
<th>Measure</th>
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| 1. Integrate EDI-centric values to all JDs.  
  1. Provide HR with EDI inclusive language for use in all job descriptions, i.e. a diversity statement  
  2. Set up a framework to evaluate individual JDs for inclusive language as they are updated in the current JD library descriptions | HR | Survey HR |
| 2. Assess future JD requirements to prevent inadvertent exclusion of otherwise qualified candidates, especially underrepresented groups.  
  1. Create best practices document for wording JD requirements  
  2. Route JDs for approval by EDI Committee | HR | Survey HR |
| 3. Require screening and interview panel members complete UC's Implicit Bias training series. | HR | Staff training completion report from HR |
| 4. Encourage formation of diverse screening and interview panels for future recruitments, allowing panel members from other departments to participate as needed.  
  1. Evaluate current processes/recommendations  
  2. Maintain a resource list of individuals willing to serve  
  3. Develop resource document on putting together diverse screening/interview panels, acknowledging that best practices may vary across departments | Leadership/Hiring Mgrs./HR | Survey Leadership/Hiring Mgrs. |
| 5. Ensure Research Affairs HR review interview questions before all interviews are initiated (to ensure that questions are appropriately job-related and without bias).  
  1. Create standardized EDI interview question list for HR to provide to departments  
  2. Encourage departments to use the EDI committee as a resource while developing interview questions | HR | HR status report |

### Objective 2 - Advancement

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| 1. Promote stress reduction and work/life balance, acknowledging inequities could be at play.  
  1. Create central list of resources for staff  
  2. Allow space for staff to share successful efforts that have been taken to promote work/life balance  
  3. Encourage periodic evaluation of leaders and managers on their efforts to promote inclusivity in the workplace | Leadership/Mgrs. | Survey VCR staff, and leadership/managers |
| 2. Make professional development funding equitably accessible to all staff regardless of their classification across VCR to prevent disadvantaging staff due to their classification status.  
  1. Gather information from leadership on current practices in Research Affairs  
  2. Determine standardized approach for professional development accessibility | Leadership | Survey VCR staff, and leadership/managers |
| 3. Ensure equitable access to professional development opportunities.  
  1. Create space for professional development by empowering staff to explicitly allocate designated time for professional development  
  2. Encourage leadership/managers to promote opportunities and ensure resources are available for participation | Survey VCR staff |
4. Ensure awareness of all Research Affairs staff of available opportunities.
   1. Encourage adoption of a more inclusive definition of professional development to include EDI-specific training, personal growth opportunities, or other non-conventional initiatives

5. Incorporate EDI employee engagement/focus in employee performance appraisal process.
   1. Include efforts to participate in and promote professional development opportunities and other actions taken to create a more inclusive work environment

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<th>Objective 3 - Culture</th>
<th>Tactical Step</th>
<th>Responsible</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Acknowledge and celebrate heritage months through VCR calendar, newsletter and staff email notices, including considerations for a VCR diversity day celebration in the few years.</td>
<td>EDI Committee / Admin support</td>
<td>EDI Committee status reports</td>
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<td>2. Create and monitor an anonymous mechanism for continuous feedback loop from staff to provide ideas or identify issues to be addressed. Co-chairs will work with leadership to review and respond to the feedback that the committee receives.</td>
<td>EDI Committee &amp; Leadership</td>
<td>Feedback mechanism in place on the VCR EDI website, to be monitored regularly by VCR EDI Committee. Metric should probably involve how many comments (positive or negative) come to the form. If low either staff don’t know about it, aren’t invested in EDI or don’t believe the feedback will be heeded. Committee will evaluate the effectiveness of the form on a quarterly basis.</td>
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<td>3. Create and manage the VCR EDI Committee website providing specifics on EDI objectives and EDI campus resources <a href="https://blink.ucsd.edu/research/edi/index.html#Get-Involved-/-Provide-Feedback">https://blink.ucsd.edu/research/edi/index.html#Get-Involved-/-Provide-Feedback</a> Include EDI language on all relevant program pages - as an example at OIC, our EIR program, AIM, and investment prep. This is still a work in progress for the committee. We will provide updates to leadership when this section of the website is finalized.</td>
<td>EDI Committee</td>
<td>Google Analytics</td>
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<td>4. Offer anti-racism training, allocating funding to bring in outside experts for workshops, training and work climate/culture assessments with a view toward continuous improvement. The committee will evaluate registration/attendance and engagement during the session.</td>
<td>HR/Leadership</td>
<td>Survey VCR staff, HR, and leadership/managers</td>
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<td>5. Increase transparency around EDI issues (e.g., the EDI accountability report). Hold VCR-hosted EDI town halls to disseminate information on VCR EDI initiatives, how decisions are made, and timely issues being addressed by VCR leadership. As appropriate, include partners and speakers to discuss decisions being made about EDI as it relates to the research enterprise.</td>
<td>Leadership and EDI Committee</td>
<td>Establish a regular schedule for town halls. Survey staff after each town hall to determine effectiveness.</td>
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