EDI Committee Updates

This past quarter, the Research Affairs EDI Committee has worked with leadership to finalize a charter that will help the committee and leadership identify roles and responsibilities and keep the initiative on track to achieve goals. The committee has also developed recommendations that address the issues that staff have indicated as top priorities. The recommendations are being reviewed by leadership and will be shared with staff at an upcoming town hall.

We would like to thank the outgoing EDI Committee Co-Chair, Heather Dillon, for all of her dedication, leadership and hard work on the committee this past year. Due to a reorganization within VC units, her department no longer sits under VC Research. We will miss her! We are fortunate that Madeleine (Mady) Paley has graciously stepped into the co-chair role and will serve alongside Co-Chair, Devon Tolliver. Sunny Kochhar has stepped down from the committee.

If you are interested in joining the Research Affairs EDI Committee, please email vcr-edi@ucsd.edu.

EDI Committee Reflections

It has been over a year since the murder of George Floyd sparked an outcry from people around the world over the injustices experienced by Black communities worldwide. We as a committee are sharing our reflections on the past year and how it has impacted us.

“The past year has been filled with pain, anger, and exhaustion because injustice and mistreatment is ever-present in my community, “I’ve constantly held my breath too many times over the course of the last year, only to realize it when there are moments of relief — and a
but there is a new sense of hope that the groundswell of support from allies across the world will lead to true and lasting change.”
– Devon Tolliver

“2020 highlighted inequity and intolerable injustices in almost every aspect of our world and has shown the importance of not only bringing all voices to the table, but uplifting them. We can choose to sit on the sidelines or we can educate ourselves and fight injustices every single day until we start to see structural and institutional change.”
– Madeleine Paley

“The murders of George Floyd, Brianna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery brought national awareness to the systemic injustices that Black and Brown communities have been fighting against for decades, even centuries. The pandemic has highlighted profound systemic deficiencies in healthcare among communities of color. It cannot be acceptable to support or condone policies and practices that continue to perpetuate discriminatory practices; we must amplify the voices of those who have been silenced or ignored for far too long. Initiatives like our committee are a step in the right direction, but we must recognize that efforts to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion are part of a never-ending process of engagement, reflection, and adaptation.”
– Jeff Narkis

"As I reflect upon this past year and the painful events and injustices that transpired, the reality is that the only thing new was these atrocities occurring against the backdrop of a global pandemic. However, as we move forward, there is a different feeling in the air, one that is hopeful for the much-needed systemic change that must occur so that all citizens are treated with dignity, respect and equality. Change is often difficult and slow, but I am inspired by those who have been doing this work for decades and have not given up.”
– Nancy Peritz

In this issue, we shine the spotlight on two departments in Research Affairs that are taking steps to incorporate EDI initiatives into their work whether directly with their teams or how they have changed their approach within their department. We spoke with Nicole Joyce, Managing Director of RA Operations & Analytics at OCGA, and Sharon Franks, Senior Director of Research Development.

Creating an EDI Safe Space
By Nicole Joyce

Making EDI a fully integrated part of our professional lives can feel daunting and ripe with missteps, so how do you even start? This was the question my team asked itself in the wake of atrocious social injustices and after the VCR EDI Town Hall. Sure, it was easy to see why this is important, but it was very difficult to know where to start and more importantly how to sustain the effort after the initial outrage subsides. So, as a leader in our organization, I turned to the people who might have some ideas: my team.

We dedicated our next full team meeting to the topic. It was not only a way to gauge reactions, but to take the pulse on where we all were and how the collective “we” wanted to intentionally move forward. By opening the doors to the conversation, with the appropriate guidelines, we carved out an EDI roadmap for ourselves. We started by talking about what we wanted out of the journey and the cadence (reminding ourselves that this is a journey, not a destination and that everyone was at a different place and with a different degree of comfort in how to engage). Not being an EDI expert, I turned to one of our amazing campus resources: the LEAD fellow program (Leaders for Equity, Advancement and Diversity).

LEAD Fellow Kimberly Linsley provided facilitation so that we could create what our team calls the “EDI Safe Space.” By engaging a Lead Fellow, I, as a leader, was able to take a step back and be a participant right along with my staff. It also provided appropriate facilitation so that we could create what our team calls the “EDI Safe Space.”

Our EDI Safe Space was created by the team as a way to meet monthly, during a dedicated time, and solely focus on our collective and individual EDI journey. With Kimberly’s help, we have mapped out a path starting with Race Talks to open the conversation, then to examining our Social Identity and up next is exploring Implicit Bias. At the core of this work is the team. It has been an organic way for us to create a place where good intentions are default and vulnerability and bravery are present. These conversations are awkward (especially given that historically many of these conversations and topics have been taboo in the workplace), but they are necessary if we are to truly change ourselves and the culture we create. I’m so proud of my team who show up ready to fully engage to the level they feel comfortable and allow learning and reflection and growth to happen among colleagues. It is an evolving effort that is complex, sensitive, and surprising. It takes intention and trust, and I am grateful to be surrounded by a great team and the support of our UC San Diego EDI community.

Promoting EDI in Research Funding Pursuits for Research Development

By Sharon Franks, Wendy Groves, Lynsey Fitzpatrick, I-Hsun Wu

Research Development (RD) helps faculty find funding opportunities and compete successfully for major grants. Compelling plans to advance EDI are a vital component of many federal research proposals, including those to the National Science Foundation (NSF), as an effective approach to addressing that agency’s broader impacts review criterion. Recently, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) issued its first funding opportunity that requires a Plan for Enhancing Diverse Perspectives. Similar requirements also now appear in some Department of Energy opportunities. RD advises faculty on impactful EDI practices – to build diverse, inclusive proposal teams, forge partnerships to engage diverse participants in proposed research and education initiatives, and persuasively communicate specific, measurable EDI objectives, activities, and success metrics. RD’s new resource on broader impacts provides guidance on effective practices and leads to prospective partners, on campus and beyond.

RD’s commitment to EDI is reflected throughout all aspects of the team’s work, including, for example:
1. Curating and distributing funding opportunities to support the campus Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence, and monitoring and communicating federal-agency funding trends that align with campus EDI efforts.

2. Ensuring all materials RD develops and delivers to enhance the competitiveness of UC San Diego proposals promote diversity and inclusion. Featured in this newsletter are two examples – From RD's resource: Graphics in Proposals – Advice for PIs, and slides from RD's presentation: Introduction to Crafting Competitive Proposals, recently delivered in a seminar invited by the Jacobs School of Engineering's IDEA (Inclusion|Diversity|Excellence|Achievement) Center.

3. Collaborating with many other campus units to foster EDI. In partnership with:
   - Foundation Relations, RD coordinates campus interest and response to institutional-level funding opportunities, such as the recent Racial Equity 2030 program.
   - The Center for Faculty Diversity and Inclusion, RD presented a webinar in June.
   - The VC-EDI and the Chancellor’s offices, RD designed and launched the Innovation Grants for Inclusive Research Excellence internal seed grant program in May 2020, to fund research-enabling activities that advance UC San Diego's Strategic Plan for Inclusive Excellence in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Diversity and Inclusive Design
Putting effort into the representation of diversity and inclusive design can build and reinforce an inclusive culture within the proposal team. The results of such effort can make the proposal more accessible to reviewers with vision impairments, as well as demonstrate commitment to diversity and inclusion to reviewers and sponsors. Recommendations:
- Reflect diversity in figures that include people – in gender presentation, skin color, ability status, height, age, weight, and other characteristics.
- Use inclusive language; avoid gendered language in figures and captions.
- Use easily readable font styles and sizes in figures and captions. More in Tips for DIY-ers.

Resources

500 Queer Scientists Visibility Campaign
Medium.com/gender-inclusivity

Straightforequality.org
Glaad.org/transgender

Hollaback!
Trans101

If you are interested in learning more about personal pronouns, visit http://http://mypronouns.org.org/
UCOP also did a series of articles for their Gender Pronoun Education/Awareness Initiative:

Introducing the gender pronoun initiative
What is gender?
Exploring the history of gender expression
Learn how you can be more inclusive

Who to Call? Resources

Resources on who to call when you or someone else is experiencing a behavioral health crisis and, for a variety of reasons, you may not want to call the police.

Local Resource 1) San Diego Access and Crisis Line @ +1 (888) 724-7240
This confidential and free-of-charge talk line is open 7 days a week, 24 hours a day, and monitored by Master’s-level and Licensed Clinicians. The counselors average 16 years of clinical experience in a variety of backgrounds, including: emotionally disturbed youth, geriatric social services, nursing, in-home domestic violence intervention, case management, and drug and alcohol abuse. Language interpreter services enable the ACL to assist in 150 languages within seconds. This service can help callers navigate community resources in San Diego County and/or support accessing counseling services.

Local Resource 2) San Diego County hospitals specializing in Behavioral Health
If someone needs urgent mental health support they can go directly to anyone at one of these hospitals. These hospitals provide mental health support and also accept Medi-Cal insurance: Bayview Hospital, Grossmont Hospital, Palomar Hospital, Paradise Valley Hospital, Mesa Vista Hospital, University of San Diego Hospital

Local Resource 3) Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT)
If someone is experiencing a behavioral health crisis, emergency assistance can be requested through San Diego County Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT). This service sends out a Therapist into the community to assess if someone is a Danger to themselves (DTO) or a Danger to others (DTO). This service is partnered with the San Diego Police Department (SDPD) and can be reached by calling (619) 531-2065.

Please also check out

Resource 4) Trans Lifeline @ +1 (877) 565-8860
"Trans Lifeline provides trans peer support for our community that’s been divested from police since day one. We’re run by and for trans people."
Visit their website at https://translifeline.org/

Resource 5) Call BlackLine @ +1 (800) 604-5841
"BlackLine provides a space for peer support, counseling, witnessing and affirming the lived experiences to folks who are most impacted by systematic oppression with an LGBTQ+ Black Femme Lens. Call BlackLine prioritizes BIPOC."
Visit their website at https://www.callblackline.com/

If you have a question or would like to share a story, event or cultural celebration, please contact us at vcr-edi@ucsd.edu or submit anonymously via the feedback form on our website.