



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
**ENERGY**

Office of  
Science

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# Office of Science

## Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiatives

### Biological & Environmental Research Advisory Committee

October 21, 2021

**Dr. Julie Carruthers**

Acting Director, Office of Diversity, Integrity & Research Integrity  
Senior Science & Technology Advisor, Office of the Principal Deputy Director

DOE Office of Science

<https://science.osti.gov>

# SC's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Initiatives

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# Promoting DEI in SC's Business Practices

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In 2018, the Office of Science's (SC) Senior Management called for a new SC Working Group on Diversity & Inclusion.

The SC D&I Working Group Charge:

- **Assess what SC is currently doing to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in its awards management and related business processes.**
- **Identify opportunities for SC to advance DEI in its business practices and demonstrate that DEI is foundational to SC business practices.**

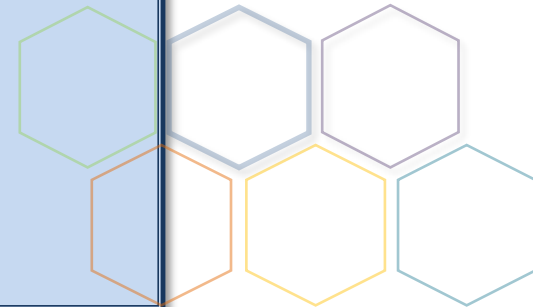
SC's Associate Directors each nominated a program representative to serve on the D&I WG. The D&I WG was chaired by SC-2 senior staff.



# SC Business Processes Reviewed

SC D&I Working Group's systematic review of SC's business processes related to its management of extramural research awards and related activities included:

- Award Making Policies and Practices within Existing Authorities
- Solicitation Language; Use of Letters of Intent & Pre-proposals
- Peer Reviewer Selection Process for all Types of SC Peer Reviews
- SC Proposal Peer Review Processes
- Peer Review of S&T Research Performance and SC Facilities
- SC Workshops, Roundtables, and PI Meetings
- SC Federal Advisory Committees and Subcommittees (e.g., COVs)
- Notional Implementation Strategies



# SC D&I Working Group - Report Recommendations

Based on analyses and discussions of the D&I Working Group, **15 Recommendations** were developed that serve to ensure that SC's business processes:

- Are supportive and inclusive of women and underrepresented groups in STEM fields;
- Allow for more rigorous tracking of diversity of applicants, awardees, and reviewers;
- Limit and mitigate potential implicit bias behaviors; and
- Encourage inclusive and professional behaviors in all SC-sponsored activities.

*The internal recommendations report was unanimously approved by all of SC's Associate Directors and SC senior management.*



# Categories of Action

Recommendations were organized into **Categories of Action** for implementation.

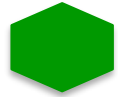
**15 Recommendations**



**7 Categories of Action**



**DEI- Supporting Policies & Practices**



**Standard Review and Selection Criteria & Protocols**



**Peer Reviewers**



**Demographics Tracking**



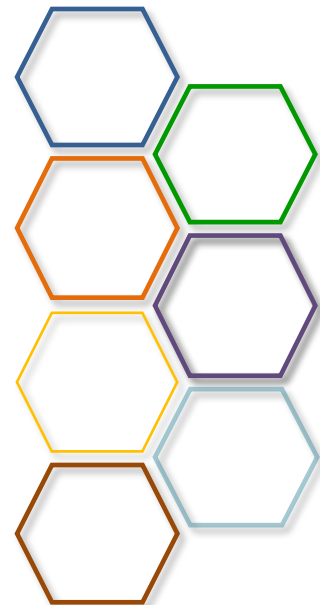
**SC-Sponsored Meetings**



**Program Manager Guidance & Supporting Tools.**



**Community Engagement**



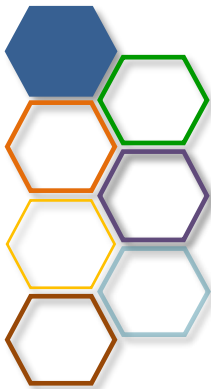
# DEI Supporting Policies and Practices

## Opportunity:

SC has an opportunity to advance DEI through better communication of existing policies within current Federal regulations and through standardizing our procedures and practices.

## Actions:

- Build on [SC's Statement of Commitment](#) through proactive communications of SC's expectations for DEI in funded activities, and associated procedures for reporting incidents and addressing concerns.
- Promote and communicate existing Federal regulations and requirements regarding non-discrimination and personal conduct in SC funding solicitations.
- Promote and utilize existing flexibilities under financial assistance agreements that supports diverse individual circumstances (e.g. communicating allowable costs, and budget modification flexibilities).



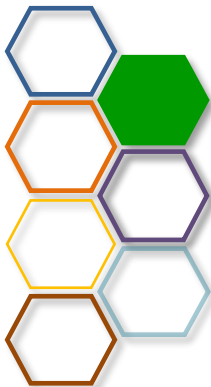
# Standard Review and Selection Criteria and Protocols

## Opportunity:

With each step in a solicitation process leading up to the peer review and selection of proposals, as well as in the post award management of SC's portfolios (e.g. S&T research performance and facility reviews), SC Programs are making decisions that present an opportunity to support DEI and have a responsibility to ensure transparent processes and objective decision-making. *Actions establish options for SC Programs to apply for a given solicitation or review process.*

## Actions:

- Update and standardize procedures for the use of Letters of Intent and Pre-applications to ensure transparent communication of requirements, promote diverse participation, and equitable consideration of diverse applicants.
- Establish a set of standard diversity-promoting review criteria options for internal competitive review of pre-applications.
- Establish a standard set of diversity-promoting Program Policy Factors for solicitations and associated program guidance for their use.
- Establish a standard set of diversity-promoting review criteria options for S&T performance reviews and associated program guidance for their use.
- Establish a standard set of diversity-promoting review criteria options for SC facility reviews and associated program guidance for their use.





# Peer Reviewers

## Opportunity:

SC solicits over 23,800 individual reviews from over 6,400 peer reviewers annually. SC has an opportunity to ensure that the diversity of its reviewer panels and reviewer pools better reflect the diversity of the STEM fields it supports, and to identify and address barriers to reviewer participation. Likewise, the quality and consistency of peer reviews would benefit from establishing additional standard SC reviewer guidance and training.

## Actions:

- Establish SC guidance for program office-specific goals (program-determined goals) for balancing the demographics of reviewers on panels and within reviewer pools.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy for recruiting new reviewers to increase the overall reviewer pool, increase the diversity of the reviewer pool, and for decreasing barriers to reviewer participation.
- Update and standardize SC's reviewer guidance to include: communication of the SC Statement of Commitment and expectations of professional conduct during SC reviews; a reminder of the appropriate role to provide constructive, technical feedback; and standard implicit bias awareness and mitigation training. Incorporate the new guidance in reviewer orientation content.



# Demographics Tracking

## Opportunity:

With standard practices for increasing reporting on demographics of applicants, awardees, and reviewers, SC will develop the knowledge base to track whether it is improving DEI within its programs and activities. With greater tracking of demographic information and process documentation, SC will have the information necessary to objectively assess whether bias is creeping into peer review and selection processes and identify areas for further process improvements.

## Actions:

- Track and document demographics of applicants throughout all review and decisions stages of the proposal review and selection process.
- Document the demographics of reviewers invited and reviewers served for all types of SC peer reviews.
- Identify and implement actions to increase the response rates of *applicants* to the demographic questions in PAMS profiles.
- Identify and implement actions to increase the response rates of *reviewers* to the demographic questions in PAMS profiles.
- Track demographics of SC Federal Advisory Subcommittee Members.



# SC-Sponsored Meetings

## Opportunity:

By providing official SC guidance and requirements for SC-sponsored and SC-commissioned meetings, SC will consistently communicate its expectations for diverse participation and for inclusive and professional behaviors in the development and implementation of those meetings, consistent with SC's Statement of Commitment.

## Actions:

- Establish an SC guidance document, written at a high level, for conducting SC-commissioned technical workshops and roundtables that includes SC's requirements and expectations for diverse participation and respectful and inclusive technical discussions.
- Establish SC requirements and expectations for host institutions of scientific meetings and conferences as a condition of SC support of meeting and conference proposals.
- Establish an SC guidance document for SC Federal Advisory Committee Subcommittees that provides SC's expectations for Subcommittee membership and Member conduct, including guidance to Subcommittee Members as they perform the functions of their official charge.



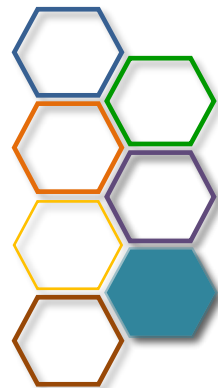
# Program Manager Guidance and Supporting Tools

## Opportunity:

Implementing changes to SC business practices requires appropriate guidance, training, and resources to all SC Program Staff involved in those practices. Providing support and enabling tools is essential in helping Program Staff carry out their roll in advancing DEI in SC's business practices. *The implementation of all report actions will involve some level of guidance and resource development to support SC Program Staff.*

## Actions:

- Develop informational and instructional materials for SC Program Managers and staff on the SC Statement of Commitment and Federal civil rights requirements as they apply to award recipients and recipient institutions, including procedures for reporting or mitigating concerns.
- Develop informational resources and tools to Program Staff for the implementation of new guidance and requirements for all recommendation actions as they are implemented. In particular, the actions related to solicitations, peer reviews, SC-sponsored technical workshops and tracking demographics.
- Host learning sessions and provide training opportunities for Program staff; develop a repository for guidance and tools available to program staff.
- Develop informational resources and tools for SC Designated Federal Officials (DFOs) and Program staff for the implementation of new guidance for Federal Advisory Subcommittees.



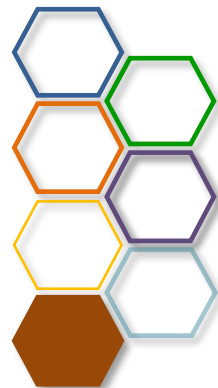
# Community Engagement

## Opportunity:

Clear internal and external communications and an engagement strategy that provides transparency on SC's existing and changing business practices to support DEI will be essential to the successful implementation of the SC D&I Working Group Report Recommendations. *The implementation of all actions related to applicants, awardees, and reviewers will require general and targeted communications to the scientific community and to the public.*

## Actions:

- Create a communications plan for providing updates on SC DEI efforts, including the implementation of the report recommendations.
- Develop a web presence for communicating SC DEI actions to applicants, awardees, reviewers, and scientific community, including updating SC's DEI sites and Grants and Contracts pages.
- Develop fact sheets, slides, and other documents that can be used by SC Program Staff to communicate new policies, SC actions, and guidance to the community.
- Post new SC guidance for technical workshops and associated templates for related communications on the SC website.
- Develop supplemental information to SC Federal Advisory websites regarding DEI guidance for Subcommittee activities.

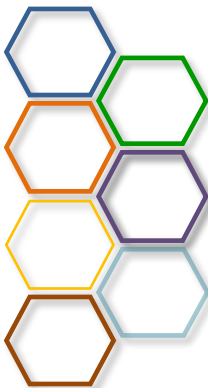


# SC DEI (Implementation) Working Group

A new, reconstituted SC DEI Working Group has been formed that will focus on implementation report recommendations.

- The SC DEI WG is focusing on a **phased approach**. Some actions will require longer development times than others.
- Actions grouped within a phase will be implemented through a development process that involves pilot testing guidance or focus groups, and regular check-ins with SC senior management and their concurrence.

Office	Implementation WG Members
ASCR	William Spotz
BER	Daniel Stover
BES	Athena Sefat
FES	Guinevere Shaw
HEP	David Cinabro ( <i>IPA</i> )
NP	Sharon Stephenson
SBIR	Eileen Chant
WDTS	Ping Ge
DOE IP	Ethan Balkin, Khianne Jackson
ARDAP	Marion White ( <i>on detail from ANL</i> )
SC-3	Kaitlyn Schroeder-Spain
SC-2*	Julie Carruthers; Daniel Stover



# SC Engagement with MSIs & URGs

- In September 2020, SC began developing the scope of an SC-wide coordinated approach to increase SC engagement with Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and Underrepresented Groups (URGs) in SC-sponsored opportunities.
- In December 2020, SC established a formal working group to lead the development and coordination of this effort.

## Working Group Charge:

1. Coordinate and implement a set of near-term defined actions focused *Increasing Participation of MSIs and URGs in SC-Sponsored Research*
2. Share outcomes and identify lessons learned.
3. Develop a set of SC corporate best practices for increasing MSI and URG participation in SC-sponsored research opportunities.



# SC MSI/URG Engagement Working Group Membership

ASCR:	Robinson Pino
BER/DIRI:	Dan Stover
BES:	Gail McLean
FES:	Guinevere Shaw
HEP:	David Cinabro ( <i>IPA</i> )
NP:	Paul Sorensen
ARDAP:	Marion White ( <i>ANL detailee</i> )
DOE IP:	Khianne Jackson
WDTS:	Ping Ge
SC-3:	Natalia Melcer
SC-2/DIRI:	Julie Carruthers, Allison Truhlar ( <i>Fellow</i> )





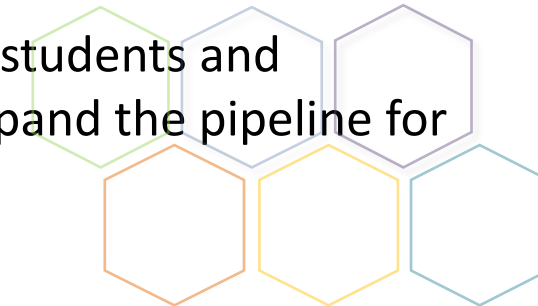
# SC Engagement with MSIs & URGs

The near-term initiatives are aimed at:

- Identifying and developing opportunities to engage faculty from MSIs in SC-sponsored research funding and increasing the number of applications (and associated proposal success rates) having MSIs as the lead institution submitted to SC-sponsored funding opportunity announcements (FOAs);
- Developing partnerships to attract and sponsor URGs in SC-sponsored research; and
- Increasing outreach, engagement, and recruitment of students and faculty from underrepresented groups to SC-sponsored research opportunities at the DOE national laboratories, including those from MSIs.

FY 2022 Budget Request: **Reaching a New Energy Sciences Workforce (RENEW)**

- RENEW initiative will provide undergraduate and graduate training opportunities for students and academic institutions not currently well represented in the U.S. S&T ecosystem to expand the pipeline for SC research and facilities workforce needs.



# SC Listening Sessions

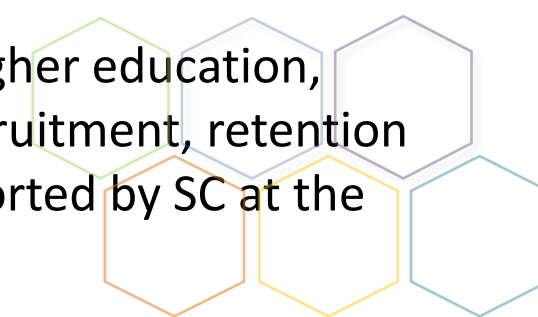
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**Fundamental to SC's approach to these efforts is understanding the barriers to participation and building on evidence-based practices.**

SC has launched a series of listening sessions to seek community input on barriers to participation in SC-sponsored research and opportunities for overcoming those barriers.

*Some key questions:*

- What aspects or requirements of SC solicitations present barriers to applying?
- What types of resources as part of a solicitation hold potential to enable individuals and institutions to overcome these barriers?
- How can SC and DOE National Laboratories better collaborate with institutions of higher education, particularly those underrepresented in the SC research portfolio, to increase the recruitment, retention and advancement of individuals from underrepresented groups in STEM fields supported by SC at the undergraduate and graduate level?



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Thank you!

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# Acknowledgements: (Original) SC D&I Working Group

Office	Report SC D&I WG Members
ASCR	Claire Cramer
BER	Sharlene Weatherwax; Seema Singh ( <i>detail from SNL</i> )
BES	Bruce Garrett
FES	Curt Bolton
HEP	Alan Stone; Michael Cooke
NP	Elizabeth Bartosz
SBIR	Chris O’Gwin
WDTS	Jim Glownia
SC-2	Julie Carruthers*; Lisa Durham ( <i>detail from ANL</i> ) Kaitlyn Schroeder-Spain ( <i>AAAS STP Fellow</i> )

