

CHEP 2016 - Diversity panel - Answers to questions

Last edit 2017/08/24 - Changed document name

Last edit 2016/10/25 - added section A2.4

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Q1 - Achieving Workplace Diversity

If facing no other options (and legal issues apart) are quotas applicable and effective mechanisms to address diversities (or lack thereof) in our field? Similarly, could we use an anonymous resume approach to job hiring (for at least pre-selection or post-selection)?

A1.1 - Inder Monga

Addressing the second question, for software engineers in particular we are using a simple coding challenge to screen qualified applicants [this removes bias associated with reading the resume]. With qualified I mean, meeting essential criteria as stated in the job description. The quality of the code speaks for the applicant stronger than their CV/resume, and has helped us hire a diverse set of summer students and software engineers.

A1.2 - Caroline Simard

First part of the question: we said quotas are not legal in the US. However, they are working for some countries - with some caveats and mixed effects. Norway's case is the most thoroughly researched

- ["Norway's female boardroom quotas: what has been the effect?"](#)
- ["Breaking the Glass Ceiling? The Effect of Board Quotas on Female Labor Market Outcomes in Norway"](#)
- ["What Norway Can Teach the U.S. About Getting More Women Into Boardrooms"](#)

Second part of question: Encourage hiring managers to run experiments - specifically around clarifying criteria (as highlighted by Inder) before reading resumes; could also blind resumes and experiment with the outcomes (you may find that other elements on the resume gives away who the person is); also consider like Inder doing a pre-screen method of qualification that is wider before reading resumes (such as coding, some tools like hackerrank do blind coding screens, or solving a problem as this org does www.gapjumpers.com). Examine the language in job descriptions for gendered patterns as well.

A1.3 - Maria Elena Monzani

Anonymous screening of resumes is an intriguing opportunity. But given that HEP is becoming more and more a "social" field, anonymous interviews sound counter-productive. I would suggest quite the opposite, such as spending time with potential candidates and evaluating their potential for improving (diversifying) the work environment. In my limited experience, "open" job searches tend to attract a more diverse pool of applicant than "targeted" searches. We should avoid writing very specific job advertisements, which may fill the immediate needs of a specific group, but not the long-term goals of the organization.

Q2 - Can our agencies help and how

Funding proposal in the US today require sections discussing aspects such as data preservation plan, safety, etc ... Would you feel a similar approach could be used for the diversity problem i.e. that project funding would require success in diversity? How can we otherwise increase the relevance and visibility of this topic with our funding agencies, to force us to act?

A2.1 - Inder Monga

ASCR has supported ESnet's efforts in funding DOE Labs participants for WINS ([Women in Networking at SC](#), joint NSF/DOE program). Such programs help early career women get exposed to computer networking, and may spark an interest to continue in the field. Sharing data openly and widely also helps people act responsibly - like sharing the diversity statistics across DOE might indicate the kind of programs (like educating to manage bias) that the funding agencies can mandate and/or fund.

A2.2 - Caroline Simard

Yes - funding agencies have a lot of power to help progress. I am not fully familiar with what DOE and other international agencies do here but for example the National Science Foundation requires a diversity merit criteria in all of its grants (you can see the slow but steady increase of awards to women in the "[Report to the National Science Board on the National Science Foundation's Merit Review Process - Fiscal Year 2014](#)"). Also better enforcement of title IX by funding agencies can also strengthen progress. Example and description in "[Title IX: Roles and Responsibilities](#)".

A2.3 - Maria Elena Monzani

I agree with all of the above. NSF diversity criteria are excellent and DOE should adopt similar strategies in its grants. Monetary incentives from the funding agencies would also help with countering some of the negative perceptions associated with affirmative action (see below).

A2.4 - Note from the editor

A note that while the US Department Of Energy (DOE) does not currently have a public statement on their Web site concerning this subject matter, reports and surveys are routinely conducted to assess the issues of diversity.

The Nuclear Physics office (as an example), through the Nuclear Science Advisory Council (NSAC) Committee Of Visitors (COV) review process provides [regular updates and reports](#) on this issue. An explicit recognition that "*NP is in a position to play a pivotal role in promoting diversity and outreach throughout its Portfolio*" is made. One of the [2016 NSAC/COV recommendation](#) to DOE/NP and the Office of Science was to "*Create a plan for the Office of Nuclear Physics to promote diversity and inclusion throughout its portfolio of programs*" as

(finding) *“There is currently no mechanism within the NP processes to encourage or value work in support of diversity or outreach in individual proposals”*. The evaluation, though based on nascent statistics and tracking via the ‘Portfolio Analysis And Management System’ (PAMS) system, concluded *“we reviewed available grant and ECA proposal actions for any evidence of bias in evaluations and found none”*. The slow pace of information gathering (and implementation of a consistent system flagged as “critical need”) was also noted and the the question was raised on whether the office may be able to influence the acceleration of this *“critical need that the Office of Science must address”*.

In [response of the office to the committee's findings](#) , the office had two major related items (program element 4) *“The Office of Science will continue its intensive effort to deploy a fully functional and effective PAMS system”* and (program element 5) *“The Office of Nuclear Physics will re-examine opportunities within its current processes and practices for ensuring diversity and inclusion throughout its portfolio and will pursue with vigor every avenue to enhance these core values consistent with DOE policy”*.

Q3 - How to address counter-effective perception of affirmative action

How can the community address the gossip that sometimes follows the appointment of an individual from a "minority" group (women, etc ...) to certain positions? e.g. "she got the position because she's a woman", "he got promoted because of affirmative action" - but not because of competence, experience etc...

A3.1 - Caroline Simard

This is a great example of bias in action. One of the way to counter this is to be very systematic in presenting individuals for their competence and expertise, and accomplishments (toot their horn for them) - it is an effective way to block bias in perceptions. Also, gently correct people when you hear this narrative.

A3.2 - Inder Monga

Agree with Caroline. The form of bias I have seen is that person may get hired, but because of this ‘gossip’, they are not supported to be successful. Management needs to provide proper support for the new hires, especially when from a minority group, so they are successful in their new position.

A3.3 - Maria Elena Monzani

This is a pervasive issue which affects very negatively the perception of women in our field. Active sponsorship from senior colleagues is absolutely crucial. It is important to point out that in any given hire, there is usually more than one “great” candidate and more than one “perfect fit” for the position. Choosing the minority candidate does not mean that the team “missed out” on

“the best”, it usually means that there were multiple outstanding applicants. Incentives from the funding agencies (see above) can reinforce the perception that hiring a minority candidate is indeed the smartest investment for an institution.

Q4 - Addressing diversity early

To really improve our diversity, we need to attack this problem at all levels — which means trying to influence attitudes in the early school years — Do you have suggestions on how we can impact at that level too? How important is it for us to reach down to elementary schools and school teachers in order to really fix the problem.

A4.1 - Caroline Simard

Yes - counter the stereotypes at every opportunity you have. Here is Sapna Cheryan's et al work on this "[Do Female and Male Role Models Who Embody STEM Stereotypes Hinder Women's Anticipated Success in STEM?](#)".

A4.2 - Maria Elena Monzani

Agree with Caroline. Given that self-imposed bias only grows with age, it would be great to expose children to our enthusiasm for science as early as possible. Volunteering at our kids' schools is an extremely rewarding experience. Volunteering at schools with a lot of minority children is even more fun, because these schools don't normally receive many visitors.

Q5 - Generation diversity

Diversity in this community may also include diversity of generation. Start-ups make their environment attractive for newer generations while our workplace tend to not achieve a needed work-life balance. What is being done (or could be done) in the community to attract (millennials especially) and create a more balanced workplace?

A5.1 - Caroline Simard

Interestingly, Silicon Valley companies are increasingly under scrutiny for age bias because their workforce is so young (see articles such as "[Time to challenge Silicon Valley's youth premium](#)" and "[Silicon Valley's Peter Pan Syndrome vs. the Aging of Aquarius](#)"). That said, if your workforce has the opposite issue (lack of generational diversity in terms of presence of younger workers), your question about balance is definitely relevant. Good resources on the topic on our website "[Redesigning, Redefining Work](#)" - We advocate going beyond flexibility policies (which often fail to become embedded in the culture of an organization and leads to the people using

the policies getting penalized) and trying to redesign how work is organized - in the scientific culture this is a challenge, but could be tested at the team level.

A5.2 - Maria Elena Monzani

Unfortunately, major research institutions tend to hire “in waves” (when money is available), instead of making a long-term plan for the growth of the organization. This is the main origin of the age distribution that we observe today. I discussed the issue of “targeted” hires earlier. A related problem is that (for example, in academia or in national labs), we are liable to invest a lot of money in very visible external hires instead of continuously devoting time and energies to developing internal talent. Younger people will not want to stick around at an institution that does not offer meaningful opportunities to grow.

Q6 - Use-case, diversity representation at CHEP 2016

What can we do to address the issue from the bottoms up? Clearly, the diversity of people attending CHEP does not reflect the population as a whole. Are there small things we can do top down?

A6.1 - Caroline Simard

Smart to build it in the conference committee design for CHEP - you could ask sponsors for scholarships for female and underrepresented minority grad students, postdocs, and early career scientists who may lack the funding support to attend. Also diversity of speakers which may require more outreach in the paper submission process. And, adding childcare to your conference can go a long way in increasing attendance from those who have family responsibilities.

A6.2 - Inder Monga

It all starts with the CHEP organizing committee - encourage diversity of participation, encourage participation from your own teams/groups. Just organizing this diversity session was excellent progress! Kudos to the committee!

A6.3 - Maria Elena Monzani

Agreed with the above. Also, it shouldn't be too difficult to impose quotas on the next edition of CHEP, if only as a gesture of goodwill. Could we imagine having a 50% female/minority advisory and program committee? Maybe a female/minority conference chair/co-chair? Same for panel and session chairs? This would actually not be illegal.

Q7 - Transparency and accountability

US National Laboratories and Universities all have procedures to address discriminations and harassment as well as hostile environment. Whether those procedures lead to result is questionable. How can we guarantee accountability and transparency in handling harassment and discrimination situations?

A7.1 - Caroline Simard

I am inspired by the work of Hannah Valentine here who is the Chief Diversity Officer of the Scientific Workforce at the NIH (see some of her work and advice in "[NIH's Hannah Valentine shares insights on workplace diversity](#)"). She has included a full investigation of increasing accountability for sexual harassment in science in her strategic plan ("[Policy: NIH push to stop sexual harassment](#)").

A7.2 - Maria Elena Monzani

Meaningful accountability is sorely lacking in our community. In the last couple of years, we saw a wave of graduate students (most notably in astronomy) who felt compelled to bring their complaints to the press because of institutional failure. Unfortunately, this brought to light that the harassing behaviors had been known and tolerated for years. I feel that we should be the first line of defense in protecting our younger/female/minority colleagues from hostile behaviors. For example, SLAC has a "[Stop Work Procedure](#)" that gives every worker "the authority and responsibility to stop work" in case of safety violations. We should have similar "authority and responsibility" to stop harassing and hostile behaviors.