

Equity and Diversity Reference Group

Purpose

The Equity and Diversity Reference Group (EDRG) is an advisory body to AAS Council.

It will promote diversity, for example, of gender, ethnicity, age, geographical distribution and scientific disciplines, and the principles of inclusion, equal opportunity, fairness and transparency in AAS policies and procedures.

Membership

1. The EDRG shall consist of 6 members: five Fellows including at least one member of Council, and one early/mid-career researcher (EMCR).
2. New members shall be proposed by incumbent members of the EDRG, after inviting expressions of interest from the Fellowship and from EMCRs. Membership of the EDRG shall be decided by Council after consideration of recommendations.
3. Principles of equity and diversity shall apply to the selection of EDRG members.
4. Members shall be appointed for 3 years except in the first two years, when staggered appointment times should be made to accommodate future rotation and continuity. Thereafter, rotation of 2 members each year is recommended to maintain continuity. Members shall normally serve for a maximum of three consecutive years.

Operations

1. The Committee shall have at least three scheduled meetings a year, strategically timed to inform relevant Academy processes: e.g. ahead of Council meetings related to Sectional and Award Committee preparation processes, after each AGM.
2. The presence of four members shall be considered a quorum.
3. Unscheduled meetings may be called to address specific issues that arise.
4. A Chair and deputy Chair (one of whom will be a member of Council) shall be nominated by the EDRG and appointed by Council. These appointments shall normally be made for a term of one year and shall not normally exceed two years.
5. The EDRG shall strive for decisions by consensus. Where this is not possible, decisions shall be made by vote and if necessary the Chair shall exercise a second or casting vote.

Responsibilities

The EDRG shall:

1. Develop an AAS Policy Statement on Equity and Diversity, and monitor its implementation.
2. Provide advice to Council on inclusion of relevant criteria for Sectional Committees (SCs) to help them decide on election of Fellows using processes that appropriately recognise the principles of diversity and equity.

3. Provide general advice to Council relating to composition and operation of Sectional Committees in relation to diversity and equity matters.
4. Provide advice to Council on adoption of best practice processes in relation to diversity and equity matters for Awards committees involved in selecting awardees of those awards administered by the Academy.
5. Provide advice to Council on how to improve the STEM pipeline.
6. Committee will advise the Academy on maintaining a record of key elements of diversity in the Fellowship.
7. Provide recommendations for the training of Council, Sectional Committees and Champions of Diversity on unconscious bias and on the principles of diversity and equity.
8. Provide advice to Council on other governance and operational aspects of diversity and equity, for example preparation of guidelines for adequate representation of diversity in Academy committees and Academy organised workshops and conferences, oversight of interaction between Sectional Committees, Awards Committees and Champions of Diversity.
9. Serve as the point of reference for the Academy's position on the SAGE initiative and related issues.
10. Develop joint programs with other Academies (e.g. Royal Society) on activities promoting diversity and equity in the AAS.
11. At the request of Council, consider issues concerning diversity and equity that may arise from time to time.