DEIA Community of Practice Call Summaries

April 11, 2024
Topic: Open Access

What are the biggest challenges from your organizations’ perspective?

For authors, equity of APCs and funding.

For Publishers, finding diverse authors/viewpoints when people need to pay as cost limits people. Navigating geographical/local challenges such as affordable fees for all and local regulations. It is difficult to manage waivers and advertising costs at the same time. How can it be made fairer; ensure that the same people do not get funding over and over.

For Libraries, the cost is too much in addition to what is already paid to subscribe. There's a push against transformative agreements because this isn't sustainable long-term. If libraries don't have to pay for subscriptions, that money can go towards OA publication costs. Publishers view this as just a change of business model.

How is the article submission process addressing implicit bias by/from editorial reviews?

Bringing in more people; trying to make people more conscious of bias and adding in geographic and career level diversity. Submission portals aren't ideal for people who struggle to use the system, ie. need more support for neurodiverse people. Having codes of conduct and mandatory training for Editors. Make review rubric more explicit not only in the review software but also in the public policies so that authors are empowered. The Prereview offers training programs for early career researchers and allow credit to be claimed on ORCID records. They offer training on bias in peer reviews as a lot of scholarly publishing/authorship is biased towards “western” viewpoints.
How are broader DEI practices translating into goals that support both authors and the community?

Fostering an environment where academics, staff, etc. can raise concerns either openly or anonymously, and then be open about how/why/why not we’re addressing those thoughts.

Mandatory bias training. Training programs for employees open to everybody, struggling with getting everyone to understand what inclusion means.

Guidance to authors regarding inclusive language: how different groups want to be represented, terms, keeping up to date with changes in AMA style guide, context on possible offensive terms.

Are authors/researchers receiving due credit when co-authoring; how do we ensure equitable credit?

Implementing CRediT across the board might be a starting point.

Helicopter research; journals have policies about this with information about how authors should share credit/recognition.

Are DEI principles being integrated into OA initiatives to promote a scholarly ecosystem that is accessible and inclusive of all?

Yes, but it’s not 100% successful.

February 8, 2024
Topic: Recruitment and Retention

Do you have examples of best practices for inclusive recruitment and retention?

Examples of best practices shared were a centralized resource library, clarity on what diversity is required, acknowledgment about supporting different working practices, training and coaching to upskill colleagues in inclusive practices, use of tools like role mapper to help communications be more inclusive and appealing to a wider audience.
Implementing best practices in inclusive recruitment and retention involves a multifaceted approach. Addressing the challenges of working in silos requires advocating for comprehensive policies from organizational leadership rather than relying solely on individual hiring managers. Practices such as pay transparency, providing candidates with questions in advance, and assigning search advocates for job postings contribute to levelling the playing field.

Creating guides ensures inclusive spaces for candidates, both physically and virtually, offering guidance and resources. Training for search committees or universities, particularly in diversity, equity, and inclusion principles, enhances awareness. Including language about hybrid work options and remote opportunities acknowledges the importance of flexibility.

Overhauling the hiring process to provide consistent experiences, including pre-announced interview questions, facilitates a more accessible and accommodating environment. Lastly, incorporating diversity-focused questions into stay interviews ensures ongoing commitment to an inclusive workplace culture.

In pursuit of inclusive recruitment and retention, effective practices have been implemented across both perspectives. To address retention concerns, organisations have conducted pay equity audits, rectifying salary disparities for greater fairness. The promotion of Individual Development Plans encourages personal and professional growth among employees, while facilitating internal mobility makes transitioning between organizational units more accessible. From a recruitment standpoint, a focus on skills over qualifications broadens the candidate pool, with job postings on diverse boards ensuring wider outreach.

Eliminating degree requirements for entry-level positions acknowledges financial constraints and promotes equal opportunities. Incorporating diverse perspectives in the interview process and continuous learning initiatives underscore a commitment to fair assessments. Volunteer engagement and community outreach efforts enhance recruitment strategies, reinforcing the understanding that inclusivity requires ongoing adaptation and learning.

**Do you have examples where there was room for improvement?**
Key findings revolve around bridging the gap between guideline development and practical application. This includes addressing accountability issues, iterative documentation development, enhancing communication, and emphasizing the importance of training.
Monitoring, adaptability to change, and continuous evaluation are also crucial aspects in ensuring effective guideline implementation. Avoiding focus on formal qualifications.

Room for improvement exists in recruitment practices, notably in the effectiveness of blind recruitment and gendered language measurement systems. Outreach to community colleges needs enhancement for a more diverse talent pool. Mandating behaviours like camera use in virtual meetings may create barriers and a more inclusive approach may be required. Additionally, achieving transparent salary structures remains a challenge, emphasizing the ongoing need for improved communication and openness. These areas highlight the importance of adaptability and commitment to refining recruitment strategies for greater inclusivity and equity.

**How do you feel our workplaces and communities can support us in inclusive recruitment and retention?**

A focus on diverse recruitment and retention strategies is required—ensuring support in this endeavour involves promoting diversity within interview panels, and acknowledging that varied perspectives contribute to fair and inclusive decision-making.

Providing employees with training in unconscious bias helps address inherent prejudices and fosters a more equitable environment. Setting clear criteria for the composition of interview panels further reinforces commitment to diversity, ensuring that the selection process is not only inclusive but also reflects a broad range of perspectives and experiences. Together, these measures contribute to building environments that champion diversity and inclusivity in both recruitment and retention efforts.

Workplaces and communities can enhance inclusive recruitment and retention by addressing the challenge of integrating remote workers through virtual engagement. Prioritizing skill development and career progression for all employees is crucial, regardless of their work arrangement. To address issues with managers, beyond recruitment, it's important to ensure employees feel safe and supported in their roles. Establishing anonymous grievance submission spaces and incorporating additional touchpoints with HR during onboarding fosters open communication and ongoing support, contributing to a more inclusive environment.

Workplaces and communities can promote inclusive recruitment and retention by fostering a culture of recommending talent to each other. This collaborative approach not only provides opportunities for career growth but also values and recognizes diverse talents, contributing to an inclusive and supportive environment.

**How do you feel mentor and buddy schemes impact inclusive recruitment and retention?**
Mentor and buddy schemes can significantly impact inclusive recruitment and retention by providing support to new employees. By including and listening to individuals new to the process, these programs foster a sense of belonging, accelerate integration, and contribute to long-term retention. Mentors guide new hires, offering valuable insights and personalized assistance, making the workplace more inclusive and supportive for individuals from diverse backgrounds.

The mentor program, while promoting internal growth and development, may present challenges with retention if not complemented by support for internal mobility across departments. Encouraging such mobility can mitigate the risk of losing valuable employees seeking advancement.

Additionally, mentor and buddy schemes contribute positively to inclusive recruitment by offering support networks and guidance for new hires. However, participation in these programs might require encouragement, as individuals may be hesitant to engage in mentorship voluntarily. Striking a balance between fostering a mentoring culture and respecting individual choices is crucial for the effectiveness of these schemes in promoting inclusive recruitment and retention.

How can we ensure people from low-income backgrounds are able to access careers in publishing?
This involves several key strategies. Firstly, crafting clear job advertisements that explicitly welcome applicants from diverse economic backgrounds is essential. Placing job ads on platforms specifically catering to diverse audiences, such as bamejobs and pinkjobs, helps reach a broader pool of candidates.

Another option to ensure access to publishing careers for people from low-income backgrounds is to remove degree requirements for applicants, promoting inclusivity based on skills and experience.

Additionally, participating in social mobility programs like Career Ready can play a pivotal role in introducing publishing as a viable career option to students from lower-income households, fostering inclusivity and equal opportunities in the industry. Combining these approaches helps dismantle barriers and promotes a more inclusive and diverse landscape within the publishing sector.

Offering specific programs, such as the Global Fellow initiative, designed for underrepresented communities in publishing, provides entry-level opportunities with a year-long commitment. Implementing tutoring scholarships, like the one for Oxford Brookes publishing, coupled with a paid internship, supports individuals who may struggle financially. A paid intern program targeting those facing challenges in entering publishing further reinforces inclusivity efforts. Exploring initiatives like the LDN apprenticeship scheme specifically recruiting from non-traditional groups can also contribute to widening
access in the UK. These multifaceted approaches collectively strive to make publishing more accessible and diverse.

**Is there anything you would do differently when recruiting and retaining volunteers?** Reflecting on recruitment and retention, one area for improvement is recognizing that fostering neurodivergent talent doesn't end with the initial hiring process.

To better support neurodiverse individuals, there is a commitment to offer ongoing support and diversify efforts continually. This includes being attentive to individual needs, asking people what support they require, and ensuring that tailored assistance is provided. Acknowledging the principle that not one size fits all, there is a commitment to continuous learning and adaptation. Additionally, the organization should explore clearer communication about the support available, recognizing that some people may be hesitant to share their needs. This emphasis on ongoing learning, adaptability, and open communication underscores dedication to creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all.

**Summary of Key Findings:**

**Examples of Best Practices for Inclusive Recruitment and Retention:**

- Centralised resource library, clarity on diversity requirements, acknowledgment of different working practices, and upskilling through training and coaching are crucial.
- Tools like role mapper enhance communication inclusivity and appeal to a wider audience.
- Comprehensive organizational policies are needed to overcome silo challenges.
- Practices such as pay transparency, providing pre-announced interview questions, and assigning search advocates contribute to fair recruitment.
- Creating inclusive spaces physically and virtually through LibGuides and incorporating diversity-focused questions into stay interviews are essential.
- Overhauling hiring processes for consistency, accessibility, and accommodation is recommended.
- In retention, pay equity audits, Individual Development Plans, and internal mobility initiatives address fairness and growth.
- Focusing on skills over qualifications broadens candidate pools, and eliminating degree requirements for entry-level positions promotes equal opportunities.
- Continuous learning initiatives, community outreach, and volunteer engagement enhance recruitment strategies for ongoing inclusivity.

**Room for Improvement:**
• Bridging the gap between guideline development and practical application is essential.
• Accountability issues, iterative documentation, communication enhancement, and emphasizing training importance are needed.
• Improvement areas include the effectiveness of blind recruitment, measurement systems for gendered language, and outreach to community colleges for a diverse talent pool.
• Mandating behaviours like camera use may create barriers, and achieving transparent salary structures remains a challenge.
• Continuous adaptation and commitment to refining recruitment strategies are crucial.
• Support from Workplaces and Communities in Inclusive Recruitment.

Retention:
• Diverse recruitment and retention strategies, including diverse interview panels, are vital.
• Training in unconscious bias, clear criteria for interview panel composition, and virtual engagement for remote workers contribute to an equitable environment.
• Skill development and career progression for all employees, regardless of work arrangement, are essential.
• Establishing anonymous grievance submission spaces and additional touchpoints with HR foster open communication and support.

Impact of Mentor and Buddy Schemes:
• Mentor and buddy schemes significantly impact inclusive recruitment and retention by providing support to new employees.
• Challenges with retention may arise without support for internal mobility across departments.
• Encouraging participation and respecting individual choices are crucial for the effectiveness of these schemes.
• Ensuring Access to Careers in Publishing for Low-Income Backgrounds:
• Crafting clear job advertisements, using diverse platforms, and participating in social mobility programs are key strategies.
• Removing degree requirements, and offering specific programs, scholarships, and apprenticeship schemes contribute to inclusivity and diversity.

Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers:
• Continuous support and diversification efforts are essential for neurodiverse individuals.
Individual needs, ongoing learning, and open communication are crucial for fostering an inclusive and supportive environment for volunteers.

December 15, 2023
Topic: Psychological Safety

1. Do you have examples of what your workplaces does well?

- Having an ethics department that looks at cases in which authors (or anyone, even anonymously) feels like reviews weren’t fair or had some bias, for example.
- Mental Health support/benefits
- [For repositories] encouraging having name change policy (ASM, IOP) or encouraging the adoption of inclusive linked data vocabulary
- Transparency around compensation
- Setting norms for meetings on psychological safety
- Mandatory training on unconscious bias
- A diverse leadership team to have space for different points of views
- Surveys, especially engaging external partners to facilitate
- Questions about anonymity from smaller publishers with fewer staff members. Brining in external monitors to support
- Flexible work environment

2. Do you have examples where your workplace could improve?

- (Bernie) C4DISC (in 2024) wants to showcase actual practical meaningful action from organizations leading in making workplaces more diverse and inclusive. Measurable practice more than policy. And what went wrong - lessons learned. Help others not make similar mistakes.
- Equity in editorial boards needs to be improved, what can be done in this regard? Open call for editors, for example. What can be done beyond surveying?
- Psychological safety practices should be re-evaluated every so often to maintain progress
- Relying on friendly connections you have isn’t ideal, especially if someone doesn’t have a friendly colleague to connect with. Need: a formal place for this type of work/support
- Managers have a lot of influence in creating the right culture. They can receive more training in these areas.

3. Is there anything in particular you would feel supported by?
• Mental health aid course for staff of publisher
• Transparent accountability when something is reported
• Would be great to have a designated place for employees to have a mental health break (for folks who work in-office)
• I think it will help us in the DEI forum and help the people engage a lot. Keeping my mind and things and making sure all on the same page of DEI activity
• It would be good to get used to setting healthy expectations and be open to critique/feedback - which can take practice - (in meetings / in groups / in orgs). It can feel scary and onerous to be the one calling something out and it can seem unfamiliar to the org/other employees, so establishing the expectations over and over and knowing at least a few people will be there to support/help if attacks happen would be good.

4. Do you have examples of different areas of psychological safety?

• Would love examples of how publishers communicate resources for authors, editors, peer reviewers, and board members
  ○ https://homosaurus.org/
  ○ https://journals.asm.org/author-name-change
  ○ https://publishingsupport.iopscience.iop.org/questions/name-change-policy/
• How to handle failure - this can be agreed as a whole org, between each team member and manager or between teams as we all handle failure differently and feeling safe can improve productivity, collaboration, and communication.
• Making space for new ideas
• How to handle productive conflict and decision making
• Giving and receiving feedback

We have resources/links in our shared sheet. Please feel free to add more and comment at any time.

Would anyone like to share any thoughts on our psychological safety discussion and summary? What have we missed? Please share with us. We can continue our discussions here before our next meeting on February 8, 2024.

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October 12, 2023
Topic: Inclusive Language

We had 40 participants join our second call on October 12, 2023. Our discussion topic was Inclusive Language which allowed us to engage in meaningful conversations around different areas. We captured some of the highlights:

1. Is it possible to define inclusive communication in a uniform way across the globe?
● In principle yes, it is not hard to make it universal if we are willing to shift the paradigm.
● We can be conditioned to make an effort to be globally inclusive, if we are willing to accept and overthrow individuals who feel the opposite.
● Must acknowledge different language/terminology may be common in some countries but not others. Important to understand this.

2. Tools to make communication as inclusive as possible, beyond a list of words

C4DISC has narrowed down some resources here.

● It's important to assign roles on who gathers and shares/trains on this information for each organization
● Strategies for addressing resistance to progress in equity from individuals within our orgs or communities. Resistance can be quite strong if you push back on unhelpful terms, so anything that can help is useful and welcomed. e.g. “I don’t use that term anymore because…”
● For DEAI meetings:
  ○ when advertising - make meetings and activities optional to avoid pushing people further into their camps
  ○ helpful to offer trigger warning at the beginning, some things might make you feel uncomfortable/ sensitive topics.
  ○ Some strategies in the meeting when gathering input from participants of examples of bias they’ve been subjected to - anonymous Google Doc option; Silent Google Docing activity for participants to write in without having to identify themselves - provide prompts, switch off cameras, give participants 10 minutes to share, takes a while for people to get going, but then it happens. People are invited to speak up if they’d like.
  ○ Make explicit reference to welcoming silence in groups where people may need time to process what they are hearing, or their thoughts. Not every space needs to be filled.

3. Inclusive Authorship

● Giving equal credit to everyone involved regardless of order and quantity. It is also worth acknowledging those who provide translations.
● The pool of peer reviewers can affect the end result of publication and whether an article is published at all if they are of the same group (lack of diversity) or do not understand the topics presented in the papers.

4. Inclusive language in publications (e.g. books, journals, other formats)

● Language evolves - staying aware even if language changes. How to keep abreast? How to manage different people’s and groups’ preferences and what has changed. (eg BAME in the UK no longer favoured, BIPOC in the US, LatinX vs Latina/Latino).
● C4DISC wonder if compiling a selection of opinion pieces on language to reflect different positions may be helpful.
5. Inclusive visual choices (e.g. data visualisations, images)

- Marketing/branding needs to pay special attention to visuals and might want to consider including a diverse group of participants when curating images (C4DISC resource - see here).
- Adding a disclaimer to images to say "some images may be offensive to some groups" might or might not be effective depending on the discipline and message.
- Inclusive "googable" images:
  - Black Illustrations: Illustrations of Black people for your next digital project. Many packs are free, some packs come with a small fee.
  - Canva Natural Woman Collection: Images featuring everyday women who are as diverse as they are beautiful. While most are available for a fee, some are free.
  - CreateHER Stock: Authentic stock images featuring melanated women. Some freebies, others available with a monthly subscription fee.
  - Disabled And Here: Free and inclusive stock photos featuring disabled Black, Indigenous, people of color (BIPOC) across the Pacific Northwest.
  - The Disability Collection: Images that break stereotypes and authentically portray people with disabilities in everyday life. Available for a fee.
  - Gender Spectrum Collection: Free images of trans and non-binary models that go beyond the clichés.
  - Stock Photography and Illustrations Featuring People from Underrepresented Groups

6. Intersectionality (investigating the intersection of different social identities and language)

7. Unconscious bias

- Making training mandatory for all editors, hiring managers, leaders and more is a step in the right direction

8. Wider world

- We acknowledge that some problematic language that is used exists beyond scholarly communications - for example in technology and marketing (master/slave; whitelisting) and we may need to engage with the wider community.

We added more resources/links to our shared sheet. Please feel free to add more and comment at any time.

**August 8, 2023**

No topic for the first call
We had 70 participants in our first call! Thank you for a great turnout and for everyone’s valuable contributions to our initial discussion. Below is a high level summary:

1. What do you hope to gain from this Community?
   - Learn from other organizations’ journeys on what has worked and what has not.
   - How are DEIA initiatives structured in other organizations?
   - What are best practices?
   - How can we still create change during difficult times when DEIA is under attacks in certain regions?
   - How to go from talk to action?
   - How to speak up when you feel at risk?
   - Learn how to create awareness
   - Possibly create materials together
   - Build an external network
   - How to build from the ground up?
   - Finding a way to leverage our collective voice with bigger/parent organizations
   - To inspire each other!

2. How can we hold ourselves to account in implementing meaningful change in our organizations?
   - Be better allies for one another
   - To have actual goals that are measurable
   - To be open and transparent
   - To accept failure as part of the learning process
   - To be patient and kind with each other
   - To be courageous and positive when speaking up and implementing change
   - Upholding a culture of psychological safety
   - Analytics are important to bring information forward

We started a resources sheet that everyone can contribute to. Please feel free to add and comment anytime.