

# DEIA Community of Practice Call Summaries

**March 2026**

## **Recruitment, Retention, & Career Progression**

- Hiring has slowed significantly due to strict approval processes and in some cases, general hiring pauses.
  - Bias checks in job descriptions
  - Skills-based hiring over background-based screening
  - structured interviews including panels, standardized questions, and scoring rubrics
  - Anti-bias training and hiring guides for managers
  - Increased transparency, i.e. upfront salary ranges, is more common
- Organizations are expanding efforts to attract diverse talent:
  - Posting roles on diverse job boards, targeted institutions, and LinkedIn
- Conversely, retention has not become an issue.
- But career progression is evolving:
  - Traditional linear paths are in some places being replaced with “squiggly” (non-linear) careers
  - Opportunities include secondments, short-term rotations, and cross functional projects (aka “gigs for growth”)
- Fewer senior roles are available in the upper rungs of the “career ladder” so lateral and cross-industry opportunities are more commonplace

## **DEI Trends & Measuring Effectiveness**

- DEI efforts have remained largely stable, although:
  - Some organizations (especially smaller ones) feel a “chilling effect” around politically sensitive topics
  - Some Universities are constrained with DEI language, but conversations around editorial freedom, accessibility, immigration, and AI data centers have continued
- Surveys of staff and external partners are used to measure DEI effectiveness
  - Key metrics include self-identified demographic data
  - Response rates have been satisfactory, but data collection and analysis is resource intensive (especially for small organizations)

## **Career Access & Economic Constraints Result in Industry Collaboration**

- Financial limitations result in non-competitive salaries and lack of sustainable career pathways for junior positions.
  - Organizations are relying more on:
    - Entry-level roles and internships
    - Freelancers over full-time hires
  - Industry collaboration allows for:
    - Sharing resources and best practices
    - Contribution to forums and networks
    - Support of diversification of freelancer pools
- 

## **January 2026**

### **Topic: Building Inclusive Products - Integrating DEI Principles into Product Development, AI Systems, and Accessibility Standards**

The January 8th call emphasized the themes of technology and accessibility, particularly surrounding Artificial Intelligence in publishing and education.

#### **The Pros**

- Alt Text in particular can be assisted greatly by utilizing AI. However, it should be reviewed for inclusive language and correctness.
- Assistive AIs, like Co-Pilot, are great tools for assisting people with disabilities.
- There is support for more inclusive language in publishing. AI has potential to detect non-inclusive language and help support more use of inclusive language.

#### **The Cons**

- Outdated technology and filetypes (pdfs, epub, ect.) are challenging to make compatible with screen readers.
- Alt text does still need author intervention, so it is challenging to get authors to complete alt text independently.
- Generative A.I. training is still particularly focused on caucasian and western materials, resulting in biased content.

#### **Future Action Items**

- Creation of guidelines or a toolkit for writing alt text in publishing may be helpful to the community.
- There is an opportunity to make a glossary for inclusive language definitions, particularly in different regions of the world.

- Additional opportunity for publishers to describe their support of DEIA and whether that creates brand differentiation and/or unique value proposition.
- 

**November, 2025**

**Topic: Career support and professional development**

Conversations about changes in career focused around redundancies and organizational restructuring that has or could result in layoffs. This in turn affects morale for those who remain in their organizations and those who are trying to find a career path. From the same idea, budget pressures and financial constraints are affecting libraries greatly. But with these changes does come opportunity to learn new skills at large institutions, and smaller institutions will potentially see stability through focusing. Although there is no way of telling how AI will truly impact the industry, we do know that we need to keep entry-level job opportunities open.

Regarding DEI, pressures from politics and culture views have created organizational shifts in DEI priorities and organizational commitments. Rebranding allows for different work to continue but there is concern over lack of dedicated positions and resulting growth of discriminatory behavior. The increasing political tension makes its way into academia, particularly through publishing behaviors. Members discussed content censorship, redaction of author information, retraction of whole articles, and policies surrounding these events for repositories. Work that is still able to be done is addressing access and pricing equity, especially across borders. As jobs are being reworked, having careful consideration of job descriptions to not remove ideals entirely will be beneficial. Also, keeping in mind that lack of DEI may affect employment of your POC coworkers, potentially through removal.

Changes in policy have mostly been about remote working. Some places are seeing uneven application of stricter policies and targeted policies for new hires being in-office have occurred.

For professional development and training there was mixed conversation about volunteering. While volunteering does provide personal or professional growth for individuals, it does have legal risk as the work becomes more technical. If volunteering opportunities are created simply for the “do more with less” idea, it is not sustainable as strong teams are needed for strong work. Other options to gain experience are to contact those in the field to have informational meetings, and by extension create a mentorship relationship with them. The members also recommended a variety of free courses to learn, such as LinkedIn Learning (often accessed through a public library in the US), Harvard courses online or through other universities, or specialized training opportunities like with [Teachaccess accessibility courses](#) or [W3C to learn about accessibility foundations](#).

The final topic of conversation was about resilience. Libraries can stay true to their values, and there is much value in maintaining cross-publisher relationships.

---

**April 10, 2025**

**Topic: Securing and Sustaining Organizational Commitment to DEIA Initiatives**

The C4DISC Community of Practice meeting on April 10 introduced the topic of the current landscape of DEIA by discussing existing corporate support and implementation challenge, sharing of committee members' experiences with organizational buy-in or lack of, how to measure success beyond traditional metrics, and explored different targeted approaches for increasing leadership buy-in.

Through discussions, it is evident that while the majority of the DEIA challenges stem from the US, it also is impacting other countries in the way they are handling these initiatives. While many organizations are still holding firm on their DEIA practices, others have had to make changes such as adjusting the language they use, keeping up with different increasingly [restrictive](#) laws and demands, and suffering budget cuts. Attendees from Canadian and European settings are not seeing any challenges to DEIA efforts.

Internal and external groups in support of DEIA initiatives are important to keep going and continue their work. The [CEO DEI Action pledge](#) and the [Barcelona Declaration](#) were mentioned as initiatives to support.

Many feel that group discussions and surveys should still keep going as ways of gathering [feedback](#) and measuring progress for DEIA challenges and initiatives.

Some specific challenges mentioned:

- HR challenges: can be hard to action anonymous feedback - how to address an issue without knowing who it relates to specifically; including psychological safety conversations in annual reviews
- ERIC database delisted journals as DOGE directive
- Discussions not always followed by action; reliance on individual efforts

- internal support bottom-up support, up to people from marginalized groups, some funding but was not guaranteed to continue in future fiscal year. External funding has waned off. Most focus in accessibility
- Employee Resource Group/affinity group nothing newer after 2022
- Recruitments were improving diversity but this has stalled, person in role was never replaced. Shouldn't be using technology and platforms that aren't accessible.

### Measuring success beyond traditional metrics

- Come up with specific Goals, follow up with surveys including OPEN ended responses
- Concrete ways to define movement
- Plain language summaries
- Tools to check accessibility on websites
  - End user testing for usability and assistive technologies
  - European Accessibility Act
  - Partnerships for increasing user testing assistive technologies
- Implement into workflow to have screen reader test as part of the workflow
- Executive sponsors for various initiatives
- Trying to find positives in difficult situations; recognizing the value of DEIA efforts
- In terms of employee comfort: conducting anonymous surveys to assess that and measure out how people have been feeling/doing and to benchmark. Not just to employees but also the customer base.
- Measurement of member demographics, but that's it, there's no system in place to measure success of DEIA initiatives.

### Resource shared

- [Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Scholarly Communication - Office of Scholarly Communication](#)
- 

**October 10, 2024**

**Topic: AI**

The C4DISC Community of Practice meeting on October 10 introduced the topic of AI in relation to DEIA and had a very broad discussion about the impact on publishing and the opportunities and challenges that the rise of AI brings.

**Room 1**

- AI has the potential to "revolutionize" publishing.
- We need to monitor the progress of AI technology to make sure the outcomes are positive.
- AI is a sophisticated tool, as with any tool you should declare your use. Do we even know when we are using AI tools? Especially in 3rd party software.
- Use of AI is not an indicator of fraud. If we are trying to ascertain how much of a document is AI generated, what do we do with that information?
  - AI content is being checked for on submission, ensuring transparency about its use.
  - Authors might be using it as a tool, but if we consider paper mills, it writes text.
- Someone mentioned that as part of the interviewing process applicants are being asked to write something – they're currently making sure that they do not use AI but do we need to?
- AI is really helpful to speakers of English as a second language, giving them a much needed advantage.

- AI is not new; Wiley published a book on lithium batteries in 2017 generated entirely by AI.
- Academic libraries are in difficult positions trying to negotiate terms to allow research and scholarly use of AI for licensed resources, and are also hearing concerns from scholars and authors about the publishers using their content in deals with AI companies.
- Scholarly Communication vendors are also concerned about their product being uploaded into AI tools, yet many are developing their own tools without any consultation over what users want.
- For some participants, editors are not allowed to upload submitted documents to AI tools due to copyright concerns.
  - Authors manuscripts should only go through tools where we understand the implications and preferably have an agreement or license in place to govern use.
  - Copyright is clear if we use copyrighted content in an AI authors must receive appropriate compensation.
- AI can also be used as a communication aid to simplify/summarize text and reach a broader audience.
- Although AI can be a great productivity tool, we don't want it to make productivity expectations ridiculously high.
- If we think about promotional or marketing messages, some publishers may be prepared to use AI generated outreach while others may not, creating concerns about the quality of communications.

## **Room 2**

- Looking at options for how to implement it, use it in manuscript moderation. This being said, using AI for decision making is very tricky because it can reinforce bias, depending on the type of material it was trained on.
- The peer review side has been paying a lot of attention to AI. Updated ethical guidelines, recognizing that AI can't hold authorship, requesting reviewers to not

submit works to AI and think their job is done. At the same time, recognition of benefits – author base spans the globe.

- Wonderful language tools – but where do you draw the line?
- We don't have deep development funds for developing software tools – relying on what's on there in the ecosystem.
- None of these questions can be answered on our own, looking to community to set standards
- Education and experimentation – some folks went to market very quickly with AI, but things have been changing so fast that some of those implementations are already out of date. Marketing – streamlining content, workflow. Ethical applications of AI in marketing, especially in a mission-driven industry. Agreed to not use AI-generated images, copyright concerns etc. May be useful for summarizing, but human touch is still needed.
  - DEI is lost in this conversation—it's easy to talk about AI without bringing in a DEI lens
- Digital colonialism – what does it mean that AI is effectively extraction in order to work? Climate change impact, data collected in order to create the tools, not a participatory process. Concerns from authors who have published OA that their content may be turned into unethical tools and used in ways that they don't want it to be used. How do we protect our authors and engage them in this process? Some of the tools scraping our content are there for legit uses, search and indexing. Does not feel like we're in control of the AI. Conflicted feelings – not sure how to stop participating in this process
- Accessibility and inclusivity. Ability to translate content is way better than Google Translate, etc. As a consumer, it's making content more accessible. For authors, get past language barriers when it comes to publishing. Share a lot of those fears, but have some hope when it comes to some of the opportunities. Have to figure out how to channel the opportunities
  - From the accessibility angle, we see a lot of possible AI benefit from things like alt text for images
- Has anyone seen or heard about discipline-trained AI? Would be ideal for authors—trust translations more than a general AI.

- Publishers are creating their own “closed” AI with their content only; cites sources and shows where it’s pulling information from. Relatively inexpensive for publishers, \$10k/year was quoted. Eliminating “junk”/unvetted research
  - Agreed—Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG) models have shown the most promise for that, where it can cite the source content
- We talk about AI as a monolithic thing, but it really isn’t. Difficulty in people understanding what you mean and how it’s being applied when you’re talking about AI. Ex. for administrative tasks, for data, generative AI, etc. Problematic to lump all these conversations together.
  - The model is still trained on the same content – same underlying biases. Even though it’s referencing that body of work, the underlying model still has issues.
  - Chat GPT is good for summary but not for details. What we want it to do and need it to do may be very different things. Don’t want it to omit important details!
  - Understanding that AI is still embedded with biases – they’re not sentient, they will not grow up and learn/evolve into a neutral thing in a utopian equality. What work have the developers and researchers done to ensure they’re not filled with biases? When folks are in a certain position, they feel that bias training is beyond them and that they don’t need to engage with it. But global society is built on a caste system and system of oppression
  - If we are thinking about models learning from scholarly research, a concern is that we have many voices excluded from publishing in the journals as we know. So we create an unbalanced, unrepresentative corpus that AI is drawing from.
- Pros and cons of peer review–training and education around AI. Not just about how we train the AI but how we train the people to understand and use it. Esp. regarding AI “hallucinations”
  - So true—I think this is why we’ll always need the “human in the loop” for AI outputs. It will never be infallible.

- We want to tackle this problem in a context where even the most ludicrous information is presented as facts. We are operating in an information ecosystem where even implausible stuff gets traction
- And real people saying complete lies...!
- AI amplifies and takes the problems into different dimensions
- And there is information that AI doesn't have access to to even be included at all. So, omissions matter.
- Use of database content by researchers is being more restricted. Understandable, but restricting what could be a more ethical, thoughtful research with IRB oversight could be a problem...! Publishers, please be more open to working with professors and researchers who want to do this research. Even researchers with individual contracts with publishers have been locked out. Awareness that researchers have time-limited grants.
- Looking at the colonization of AI –there's also an aspect of the colonization of labor as well, people in the global south doing the actual labor for AI. AI is seen as “technologically advanced” but it's still employing the same models of exploitation.
  - Discussing AI also involves talking about what's powering it and how ethically this is being done. Electricity demands, impacts on climate and who suffers most when those are degraded, who has the most resources when it comes to a shifting climate...
- An issue I have heard from some of those leading small institutional publishers/library publishers is that they are being asked for advice in terms of sharing their work with AI models. They feel unprepared to respond so we need to be mindful that not all publishers have the resources to equip themselves with the knowledge needed to advise their authors. We don't want these presses and their works excluded!
- Should we be using AI? This is not something that anybody asked for. Ex. I wanted a community solution to accessibility...
  - If we look at tech exploitation and the rise of smartphones, did we need these? Extraction of lithium, genocide in the Congo...if there's transparency about the true cost of these developments, that may help

- Why are we calling it intelligence when it's automation? Words matter. Shifting notions of semantics to challenge its "intelligence"
  - Should we go back to calling it the "algorithm" – it implies someone made it, that it's not independently thinking
  - "artificial automation"

### **Room 3**

- What is your understanding of AI and its current capabilities in publishing?
  - AI and equity issues, content creation, looking at content from an equity lens, attempting to identify bias.
  - Weighing opportunities versus threats and limitations - human factor should never be replaced, but thoughtfully facilitated by AI
  - AI and anti-labor philosophy - affecting equity work, little control over apps,
  - Some of us need to further their AI investigation
  - Some of us use it for automation
  - Ensure diversity as in broad representation in further finetuning, monitoring, optimization, removing biases, etc
  - Infrastructure is an issue in the global south.
- Has your company introduced an AI policy?
  - AI policies are being introduced by companies with working groups or by developing best practices based on guidelines like that of the US Department of Labor and AI or the European Guidelines.
- What are the practical implications and applications of AI within publishing?
  - The globalization aspect of publishing
  - AI as a facilitator in publishing
  - Being transparent about AI usage disclosures and how

## Resources shared by attendees during the call

[Using AI in peer review and publishing](#)

[Libguide for GenAI from the University of Arkansas](#)

[US Department of Labor and AI](#)

[Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Scholarly Publishing - Access to Perspectives Podcast](#)

[The good, the bad, and the unforeseen consequences with the release of ChatGPT - Access to Perspectives Podcast](#)

[AI and digital neocolonialism: Unintended impacts on universities](#)

[Decolonial AI: Decolonial Theory as Sociotechnical Foresight in Artificial Intelligence](#)

[WFMU: Tectonic with Mark Hurst: Playlist from September 23, 2024](#)

[Public Interest Groups to Biden: You Met with CEOs on AI, Now Meet with Us](#)

[Stakeholder Engagement for Responsible AI: Introducing PAI's Guidelines for Participatory and Inclusive AI](#)

### Resources for

- Authors : [Generative AI \(asm.org\)](#)
- Reviewers: [ASM Journal Reviewer Guidelines](#)
- Editors: [Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy \(msubmit.net\)](#)

### The varying openness of digital open science tools

- preprint: <https://zenodo.org/record/4013975>
- VoR: <https://f1000research.com/articles/9-1292>

### We need a decolonized appropriation of AI in Africa

- <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-023-01741-3>
- [OA version](#)

### Workflows and AI

- [AI and digital neocolonialism: Unintended impacts on universities](#)
  - [Decolonial AI: Decolonial Theory as Sociotechnical Foresight in Artificial Intelligence](#)
- 

**August 15, 2024**

**Topic: Reflections on the past year**

The C4DISC Community of Practice meeting on August 15, 2024, reviewed several topics that had been the focus of discussions over the past year.

Attendees shared reflections on the five (5) topics below in breakout rooms.

**1. Inclusive Language**

- Room 1
  - i. Discussed best practices for using inclusive language in scholarly communications
  - ii. Reviewed recent developments in terminology and style guides
  - iii. Shared examples of successful implementation across different publications

**2. Psychological Safety**

- Room 1
  - i. Discussed being more prescriptive when it crosses boundaries and how to navigate that without being too prescriptive? Particularly in contexts that involve people from different countries/cultures, such as things like talking about someone's appearance, etc. - which can feel

like crossing a boundary

### 3. Recruitment

- Room 1
  - i. Discussed internship practices in different countries. What is law versus received wisdom? - having an approach that's inclusive and doesn't rely, for example, on having a college degree
  - ii. Discussed challenges and potential solutions for creating more inclusive recruitment processes
  - iii. Knowing what others were doing really helpful and there were lots of actionable points taken from that e.g. sharing interview questions with candidates in advance is a positive change, also looking at how to attract diverse candidates
  - iv. Smaller organizations can get really daunted as it can be hard/impossible to be fully compliant, but keeping in mind that one or two points is better than none.
  
- Room 2 - Recruitment was a major area of focus for this Breakout Room
  - i. There's value in preparing both the interviewee and the interviewer
  - ii. Sign language is that they had simulated scenarios of somebody who is deaf who had an interpreter only like minutes before the job interview. And the other scenario where they had had time to talk in advance and the interpreter was able to do a little bit of research about the discipline, the interpreter literally sounds more confident, which makes the candidate sound more confident because the interpreter is that candidate's voice. So there was a significant difference between somebody getting the job when the interpreters had prepared.

- iii. For publishing scholarly communications, that accountability piece is really crucial because folks are now paying attention to the big fuss that we've been making about it. unpaid reviewer's doing lots of work and things like that, but the editors and how that works, that's why we need funder
- iv. Good resource and research
  - 1. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/here-are-the-states-where-lawmakers-are-seeking-to-ban-colleges-dei-efforts>

#### **4. Open Access**

- Room 1
  - i. Explored the intersection of open access and diversity, equity, and inclusion
  - ii. Discussed strategies for making open access more inclusive and accessible to researchers from diverse backgrounds

#### **5. Accessibility**

- Room 1
  - i. Found it Interesting to hear what others are doing
  - ii. Shared that challenges for publishers / librarians can be different - compliance with legislation as well as wanting to do the right thing. sharing best practice is important
  - iii. Accessibility for publications seems to be something lots of organizations are working on and working on continuously making materials better, partly in order to be compliant with accessibility acts. there's a challenge with older material.
  - iv. Questions arose about when hosting the material/providing, how to proceed in this case when you're not necessarily responsible for generating the content? that's something they're having to deal with, with limited staffing and funding

- Room 2
  - i. Previous Secretary of Science & Tech wanted to "kick the woke ideology out of science". This was the Conservative party, now kicked out of government. Thankfully there was a backlash in the UK science community.' See resource below.
    1. <https://wonkhe.com/wonk-corner/michelle-donelan-kicks-woke-ideology-out-of-science/>

### **Are there any topics you would like to revisit in the next year?**

- Recruitment
- Recruiting diverse journal Editors

### **What topics would you like to see in the future?**

- Room 1
  - Discussion on navigating difficult interpersonal situations would be very helpful
  - Accessibility in different contexts, focusing meetings to each aspect, for example, in the context of published material or within the org or for editors. Smaller calls with more focused topics (really for any topic).
  - Buy-in at the corporate level
    - Initial support, but hard to get everything done in practice.
    - Things need to be operationalized again. We need more organizational buy-in and promotion.
  - Getting corporate budget: Challenging to support DEIA initiatives when there's lower ROI (eg. no APCs associated with some submissions).

- Getting protected time to work on DEIA initiatives

### **Does anyone have any suggestions for continued improvement and education?**

- Challenging to have everyone meet together in a meeting due to time zone constraints. Interest in creating a blog article with highlights/links that can be used for asynchronous learning.
- Challenges of email chain

Are there any ideas for fostering an even more open and supportive environment?

- Interest in DEIA toolkit
  - Broad interest in bibliodiversity
  - Breakouts are helpful to allow for conversation.
  - Easier to talk within a small group instead of in the larger group.
- 

**June 13, 2024**

**Topic: Accessibility**

### **What internal policies and guidelines does your company have in place to ensure accessibility?**

Accessibility should be anchored in robust internal policies and guidelines regulated by the HR Department (American Disability Act in the US).

The initial push needs to come from an organizational level to support employees (top-down).

One of the participants spoke about having a staff “skills share” block at all staff meetings (for instance head of HR share accessibility accommodations, steps), encouraging people with accessibility knowledge (whatever that may be) to share what accessibility means to them and how they handle it in their job. The idea is to first raise awareness about all

different ways accessibility is present in the workplace so this knowledge can be transformed into actionable items.

Other than that, it might be helpful to implement employee resource groups and task forces that handle DEIA related-topics.

Efforts should be more focused on making the workplace digitally accessible through practices like implementing alt text and fostering inclusive language. For example, adoption of the C4DISC guidelines for inclusive language, tailored for specific applications such as design, marketing, and peer review.

There should be an inclusive culture where people can come forward and ask for accommodations, as accommodations are dependent on disclosure. Self-advocacy is a big component in this, however, there's the issue of the emotional labor burden it brings for the individual. There is also a lot of confidentiality around disclosure impacting peer awareness and support mechanisms.

Having a good feedback system is also vital.

The US system is quite litigious—there are a lot of changes that aren't made/enforced until someone has sued over it; threat of legal action is often what makes for compliance.

- Section 508: This law requires federal agencies to make their information and communication technology (ICT) accessible to people with disabilities.
  - ADA Web Accessibility Guidance: The Department of Justice has issued guidance on web accessibility under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which applies to state and local governments and businesses open to the public.
  - ADA Accessibility Standards: These standards apply to places of public accommodation, commercial facilities, and state and local government facilities in new construction, alterations, and additions.

Are funders starting to pay attention? When things hurt bottom lines, that makes change.

**What are the biggest accessibility challenges from your organization's perspective?**

Gathering and actioning feedback was mentioned by more than one group.

The emotional labor/burden for folks that need to self-advocate.

One possible solution raised that could address both these concerns is to implement anonymous surveys (keeping in mind that for this to work it's necessary to ensure trust in the process and make sure people feel like it's a safe space).

Establishing an accessibility working group or Employee Resource Group (ERG) can help, but it's important to differentiate between support groups for employees with disabilities and those focused on implementing accessibility improvements.

There's also the need to ensure that requesting feedback is not just a formality, management must demonstrate a genuine willingness to consider and act on employee input. Employees need to see that their suggestions lead to tangible changes.

To be proactive in addressing accessibility, start by conducting thorough audits of both physical spaces (ensuring the office is accessible to all) and digital platforms (ensuring website navigation without a mouse is possible).

Systems themselves might not be accessible so ideally, we'd create systems that make accessibility easier and integrated.

It's difficult to make accommodations when physical space is not able to be altered. Are there any examples of extremely inclusive, accessible offices? Lack of physical adjustments for office space, wheelchair accessible. Disabled doors not working at times. There's very little improvement in making accommodations for people and not fixing these.

Addressing neurodivergence requires special attention due to the evolving understanding of these needs and the prevalence of late diagnoses. People may be uncertain about the accommodations they need, so this process must be iterative, with continuous evaluation and adaptation based on ongoing feedback and emerging needs.

### **What steps do you take to foster an inclusive culture for employees with disabilities?**

First of all, it's crucial for everyone to have an understanding that different people need different accommodations and that a more accessible workplace benefits *everyone* (e.g. disabled toilets are better for everyone).

Developing best practices for requesting reasonable adjustments: most new buildings should have accessibility requirements, and this can really depend on the request. All requests should be taken seriously and be accommodated properly.

It's also important to keep in mind invisible disabilities.

Working off of the social instead of the medical model of disability.

- The social model says that people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their impairment or difference. Barriers can be physical, like buildings not having accessible toilets. Or they can be caused by people's attitudes to difference, like assuming disabled people can't do certain things. The environment is disabling.
- The medical model looks at what is "wrong" with the person, not what the person needs.

At what point does accessibility kick in? From when they become a staff member or earlier? You aren't allowed to ask about reasonable adjustments in the interview, but you can when you offer a role. They should feel comfortable to disclose this though, this is offered in the job application when someone applies for a role.

At what point does/should accessibility set in in our interactions - Should accessibility be limited/restricted to disabilities only or are there other forms of being accessible that should always be considered?

### **How do you gather and act on feedback from employees regarding accessibility issues?**

First of all, it needs to be made sure that requesting feedback isn't an empty gesture but that employees can trust management/leadership are willing to take feedback under advisement and make changes. It's also important to ensure trust in the process and make sure people feel like it's a safe space

Because self-advocacy can be an issue, implementing anonymous surveys can be a solution.

Disclosing what's possible in terms of accommodations is also important.

Having employee resource groups (ERGs), an Accessibility working group, and/or task forces that handle DEIA related-topics. For this, it's important to be careful to separate any support groups for employees with disabilities to share with one another from working groups tasked with implementing accessibility improvements.

How do we know where to start? How do we know what questions to ask so we can be proactive rather than relying on self-advocacy? Some options/starting points are:

- Perform an audit for physical accessibility (can anyone reach the office?) and digital accessibility (can you navigate the website without a mouse?)
- Neurodivergence is also sort of a whole separate discussion
  - Evolving, lots of late diagnoses, people may not know what accommodations they need

### **How do you ensure the workplace environment (physical and digital) is accessible?**

Again, first of all, it's crucial for everyone to have an understanding that different people need different accommodations and that a more accessible workplace benefits everyone (e.g. disabled toilets are better for everyone).

Policy often outstrips practice, most accommodations help EVERYONE.

Some examples of how can we be proactive about providing accommodations without requiring the emotional labor of self-advocacy:

- Having HR as a mediator rather than need to go to leadership/management—create a safe space.
- Basic accommodation training for managers.
- Guidance for hosting virtual meetings (color contrast & text size when sharing slides, providing slides & agenda prior to meetings, AI note-taking, captions).
- Implementing C4DISC guidelines for inclusive language, also adapting it to specific contexts, such as for design, marketing, peer review.
- Communication guidelines can be really helpful for neurodivergent employees.

- Advocating and implementing changes to accommodate for employees (e.g. always sending out communications in a text format instead of PDF/images so it's accessible for people using screen readers).
- Having an active Accessibility working group.
- Separate groups one for accessibility and one for disability and different budgets for each group.
- Maps are good to provide proactively (e.g., at conferences).
- Consider colour coordination - e.g. a different colour for each floor of a building.
- Keep in mind colour contrast - between walls and floors and doors. Labs can be especially challenging in this.
- Also good to provide pictures/names to help with face blindness and to facilitate.
- For inducting new people, consider writing out the "unspoken rules" in the office - e.g. who makes the cup of tea and when is it your turn; doors open or doors closed.
- Something that can be useful - especially for some neurodivergent people - is having a sign on the door or a cubicle, indicating if they're open to communication or not:



Roll over image to zoom in

- Really, *really*, look at your visual imagery, your photos on websites and social media. Are there visible disabilities depicted positively? It is okay to hire a model who is visible disabled (blue glasses/sunglasses, visually impaired, white cane, guide dog, wheelchair, crutches, missing limbs, prosthetics, etc.) It is NOT okay to "crip up" - i.e. get an able-bodied person to use a wheelchair or white cane, etc for the purpose of photographing.

### Some resources shared:

- [Social model of disability](#)
  - [Disability Access workshop – Dr Katherine Deane & Dan Burrill](#)
  - Information on web accessibility guidelines: [Accessibility and assisted digital - Understanding WCAG 2.2](#)
  - [A guide for employers when working with deaf sign language users in the UK](#): This is research done on deaf people going through recruitment and how employers should handle the arrangement of an interpreter - TLDR- hire the interpreter well in advance and give them prep time with the candidate!
  - Research outputs which are about neurodiverse science careers, but some of it is relevant for neurodiverse people.
    - [EnDISC Enabling NeuroDiverse Inclusive Science Careers](#): Top tip is for it to be an iterative conversation. And putting in recruitment adverts that acknowledges people need different things to be their best and there's support for this.
    - Report on menstrual health at work: [Recommendations for improving support for researchers managing menstrual health](#)
    - [Lab Access Guidelines](#): A great resource with lots of guidelines on accessibility.
- 

**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.

---

## **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 Docketing 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.

---