

CURRENT

Inclusion Strategic Plan

2018 - 2020

Our nation derives strength from the diversity of its population and from its commitment to equal opportunity for all. We are at our best when we draw on all the talents of all parts of our society, and our greatest accomplishments are achieved when diverse perspectives are brought to bear to overcome our greatest challenges.

*-- President Obama
Executive Order 13*

....realizing the full potential of our people and managing a capable and motivated organization that provides an inclusive and positive work environment ... seeking and including contributions from all sources while reaching out, especially to groups that are underrepresented, serving scientists, engineers, educators, students and the public across the nation ...

*Empowering the Nation through Discovery and Innovation
NSF Strategic Plan for Fiscal Years 2011 - 2016*

Overview

This Plan provides a shared direction and creates alignment so CURENT can approach our workplace diversity and inclusion efforts in a coordinated, collaborative, committed, and integrated manner. The CURENT Inclusion Strategic Plan (Plan) builds on CURENT's Diversity Plan.

Background

CURENT has developed this Inclusion Strategic Plan based on multiple sources including: (1) the National Science Foundation (NSF); (2) National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA); (3) the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM); and (4) US. Department of Veterans Affairs [1-4]. The strategic plan includes CURENT's inclusion definition, vision/mission, goals and guiding principles, practices and action steps and metrics. In order to implement an effective inclusion plan, we will build upon CURENT's existing Diversity Plan. The Inclusion Strategic Plan (henceforth referred to as the Plan) is the centerpiece of the Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) framework at CURENT.

Definition of Diversity

Workforce diversity is defined as a collection of individual attributes that together help CURENT pursue organizational objectives efficiently and effectively. These include, but are not limited to, characteristics such as national origin, language, race, color, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, educational background, and family structures. The concept also encompasses differences among people concerning where they are from and where they have lived and their differences of thought and life experiences.

Definition of Inclusion from NSF

“Inclusion is defined a culture that connects each employee to the organization; encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness; and leverages diversity throughout the organization so that all individuals are able to participate and contribute to their full potential” [1].

More specifically, CURENT defines inclusion to be a set of behaviors and norms, procedures and practices that optimize the benefits inherent in our diversity and encourage all students, faculty and staff (henceforth referred to as employees) to feel valued for their unique qualities and to experience a sense of belonging and fairness.

Research has shown that while organizations may have diversity, employees may not perceive that their social identities are appreciated and included in the workplace [1-4]. Building an inclusive environment ensures all employees feel included, connected and engaged. Creating a diverse and inclusive workforce that encompasses all segments of society requires a sustained commitment to ensuring a level playing field upon which employees may compete for opportunities as they arise.

CURRENT's Leadership Team (LT) is committed to nurturing and sustaining a diverse and inclusive workforce. The LT draws upon the center's core strategies to broaden participation and learn through assessment and evaluation of its programs, processes and outcomes; continually improve them; and employs outcomes to inform CURRENT's planning, policies and procedures. The Lead Responsibility for the implementation of this plan is CURRENT's Center and Deputy Directors and Director of Education and Diversity. The CURRENT Leadership Team and Student Inclusion Committee are key contributors for implementation of this plan.

Characteristics of an inclusive environment

We defined specific characteristics of an inclusive work environment as:

- Differences along all individual and cultural dimensions are recognized and valued;
- The diverse ways that individuals learn, know and communicate are respected;
- Open and honest communication among members is encouraged;
- Policies and activities which promote understanding and appreciation of all members are encouraged;
- Center progress and change are viewed in a positive light;
- The "unwritten rules" of the center are understood by all members; and
- Flexibility is demonstrated to accommodate differing needs.

Mission, Vision, Goals, Action Plans

The remainder of this plan elaborates on the mission, vision, goals, and correlating action plans. To fully integrate and implement the mission and vision, and ensure the successful growth of a sustainable, inclusive organizational culture, CURRENT has identified five major goals, consistent and parallel with NSF standards. Components of inclusion best practice plans such as leadership, accountability, measurement, and training are integrated in the goals. The goals are intentionally broad to allow Center leadership, faculty, staff and students to elaborate upon and further specify mechanisms for implementation.

In the Action Plan, each goal is accompanied by a brief description of completed actions, actions in progress, and future actions. CURRENT will engage the entire workforce in an open dialogue to determine final actions associated with each goal. By June 2018, CURRENT will create a companion action list of finalized specific actions to achieve the goals herein with associated timelines, action owners, accountable parties, and metrics. Progress towards achieving the overall goals and priorities will be tracked against this action plan and reported to all employees annually.

Mission Statement

CURRENT's mission is to recruit, retain, and develop a diverse, high-performing workforce that draws from all segments of society and values fairness, diversity, and inclusion to promote the progress of science and engineering.

Vision Statement

CURRENT's vision is to be a model for research centers by leveraging diversity and fostering inclusion to deliver on the CURRENT mission.

CURRENT Inclusion Goals

1. Demonstrate commitment and engagement of CURRENT leadership team to sustain and institutionalize a culture of inclusion by developing structures and strategies to equip leadership with the ability to manage diversity, be accountable, measure results, and refine approaches based on such data.
2. Cultivate an inclusive, equitable, supportive, welcoming work environment and organizational culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness to enable individuals to contribute to their full potential and further retention.
3. Share responsibility and accountability through effective communication.
4. Engage strong community partnerships.
5. Triangulate assessment by adopting data-driven and evidence-based approaches.

References

1. National Science Foundation. *Diversity Initiatives*. Available from: <https://www.nsf.gov/od/odi/diversity.jsp>.
2. National Aeronautics and Space Administration, *NASA Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Implementation Plan*. 2012; Available from: <https://odeo.hq.nasa.gov/documents/diversityInclusion.pdf>.
3. U.S. Office of Personnel Management. *Governmentwide Inclusive Diversity Strategic Plan*. 2016; Available from: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/diversity-and-inclusion/>.
4. U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, *Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan*. 2017; Available from: <https://www.diversity.va.gov/products/files/StrategicPlan.pdf>.

Inclusion Action Plan

GOALS	COMPLETED ACTIONS	ACTIONS IN PROGRESS	FUTURE ACTIONS
<p>1. Demonstrate commitment and engagement of leadership</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicated with external consultant • Examined inclusion research • Developed strategic and action plans • Defined inclusion visions and goals • Discussions with partner universities • Stressed the importance of Inclusion among faculty, staff and students • Developed channels to appreciate employees at annual award dinner and other events/channels • Explored training and actions to improve center's inclusion plan 	<p>1.1 Center-wide workshop on May 14th-15th</p> <p>1.2 Refine action plan based on employee feedback</p> <p>1.3 Review relevant policies and action plans from other successful models</p> <p>1.4 Enhance mentoring program</p> <p>1.5 Seek expert input</p> <p>1.6 Affirm value of inclusion in the plan</p> <p>1.7 Build effective communication channels</p>	<p>1.8 Conduct analyses of participation patterns in training opportunities, with particular attention to leadership development activities</p> <p>1.9 Design methods to identify systematic barriers to participation and strategies to overcome</p> <p>1.10 Develop and implement succession planning system for mission critical occupations</p> <p>1.11 Examine performance plans of all managers and supervisors</p> <p>1.12 Annual inclusion focused events during site visit</p> <p>1.13 Analyze monthly progress</p> <p>1.14 Refine action plans based on workshop and other feedback</p>
<p>2. Cultivate an inclusive, supportive, welcoming, and equitable work environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented inclusion component into CURENT IMPACT program (students) focusing on Innovation, Mentorship, Professionalism, Adaptation, Creativity, and Technology • Analyzed inclusion surveys • Monthly informal gatherings • Monthly SLC center-wide and school-specific social events for students • Weekly meetings to identify barriers • Built a flexible work schedule based on needs 	<p>2.1 Iteratively modify IMPACT based on student feedback</p> <p>2.2 Form inclusion committee</p> <p>2.3 Respond to concerns and questions raised from survey results</p> <p>2.4 Develop community co-design activities for all students</p> <p>2.5 Build mentorship programs and training</p>	<p>2.6 Promote new employment and continued employment of individuals who embody the Center goals</p> <p>2.7 Coordinate participation of groups in addressing career/life balance and integrate solutions</p> <p>2.8 Formalize a succession planning and employment development program</p> <p>2.9 Promote SLC events at all CURENT schools</p>

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GOALS	COMPLETED ACTIONS	ACTIONS IN PROGRESS	FUTURE ACTIONS
<p>3. Share responsibility and accountability through effective communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group formed from SWOT analysis • Center-wide SLC meetings • Open house to share research and recruit students • Professional training (Title IX, Accessibility, and others) • Informal mentorship among faculty and staff • Webcasting CURENT center-wide SLC Seminars to partner schools • Updated center-wide intranet (e.g., Confluence) for better communication • Updated list serves 	<p>3.1 Share copy of inclusive strategic plan with all employees</p> <p>3.2 Explore development of formal employee focus group and identify role of regular meetings</p> <p>3.3 Review and address SWOT analysis results</p> <p>3.4 Student Inclusion Committee to provide direction for activities</p> <p>3.5 Center-wide formal mentorship (graduate students)</p> <p>3.6 SLC creating technology onboarding for new graduate students</p>	<p>3.7 Re-structure CENTER orientation for new students based on SLC feedback</p> <p>3.8 Develop robust orientation process for new employees</p> <p>3.9 Center-wide mentorship retreat for graduate student mentors and mentees during site visit</p>
<p>4. Engage strong community partnerships</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborated with relevant community engagement offices • Connected with diverse organizations (ex. IEEE, NSBE, SWE) to better understand issues • Built communication channels with industry through visits, newsletters, website, meetings, and contacts • Active pre-college programs with the focus on diversity 	<p>4.1 Expand inclusion efforts to industry members by disseminating seminars, training, through website, newsletters, and emails</p> <p>4.2 Communicate with industry members</p> <p>4.3 Continue to build partnerships within respective universities to leverage resources</p>	<p>4.4 Reach out to experts and organizations to improve knowledge and experience</p> <p>4.5 Continue to expand community partnerships</p> <p>4.6 Collaborate more with campus organizations</p> <p>4.7 Identify potential for expanding orientation programs for new employees</p> <p>4.8 Leverage existing industry partnerships</p> <p>4.9 Design and implement new approaches as appropriate.</p>

Inclusion Action Plan

GOALS	COMPLETED ACTIONS	ACTIONS IN PROGRESS	FUTURE ACTIONS
<p>5. Triangulate assessments by adopting data-driven, evidenced based</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researched the quantitative measurement of inclusion • Developed first draft of measurement • Researched focus group method 	<p>5.1 Develop metrics to measure effectiveness</p> <p>5.2 Develop short-medium-long-term assessments</p> <p>5.3 Collect qualitative data through focus groups and informal discussions among employees to create action items</p> <p>5.4 Develop a data tracking system</p> <p>5.5 Seek experts for suggestions</p>	<p>5.6 Design a structured process for obtaining input of broadening participation and inclusion in the development of next CURENT</p> <p>5.7 Create an advisory board</p> <p>5.8 Develop and widely distribute a set of inclusion measures</p> <p>5.9 Optimize inclusive policies, processes, and programs by building a feedback-loop of assessing programs regularly and following the process of redesigning and revising organizational structures and processes.</p>