



ISN Position Statement on Diversity

The ISN embraces the principles of diversity and believes that appropriately emphasizing the diversity of our organization and of our teams will make for a stronger, smarter, and more effective ISN.

The ISN commits to:

A: Introduce pro-actively the topic of diversity into all personnel considerations

The principles of diversity will be embraced in all nominations & appointments for

- ISN Officers
- ISN Councilors
- ISN Committee chairs and membership
- Scientific program committee chair, co-chairs, and committee members for WCN, Nexus, Forefronts, and other ISN scientific meetings
- Plenary and all other invited speakers at ISN meetings
- Abstract review groups for ISN meetings
- ISN supported speakers at ISN-GO CMEs
- Recipients of ISN grants and awards
- ISN HQ staff

B. Use diversity as a "value-added" criterion of selection.

Once women and those from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds are "in the mix" as per "A" above, then the ISN commits to using a separate layer of commitment to diversity that comes in the final selection process.

In every selection process, use of "historical" criteria (scholarship, service to ISN, international recognition, etc.) inevitably results in a handful of candidates who are, on the face of it, equally qualified.

The ISN will embrace diversity principles which state that, in this situation, criteria outside the "historical" criteria now are to be considered for their "value-added" effects. These should include gender and ethnic and cultural diversity, but in addition (and for obvious reasons with an international organization) will include considerations of geographical representation. The ISN commits to try to balance these potentially competing selection drivers so as to create, whenever possible, programs, committees, leaders, and groups that are diverse from a gender, ethnicity and cultural perspective.

C: Review and Report on the impact of its position on diversity.

At each WCN, the outgoing ISN President will present a 'Diversity Report' to Council providing information on the number of women and those from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds nominated for all ISN positions identified in A. above; and the number from those categories who are appointed to those positions.

Background 1: The Argument for Diversity

There have historically been a number of arguments for pro-actively increasing the involvement of women and/or under-represented minorities in organizations generally, and in medical organizations specifically. These have included

- righting past wrongs
- creating role models for physician-scientists in clinical practice and/or academia
- connecting better with constituents, stakeholders, and patients
- fostering teaching about racial/gender disparities in healthcare
- fostering research into racial/gender disparities in health care,
- increasing enrolment of women and minorities into academic institutions, and fostering research on minority/women's diseases
- helping minority/women patients gain more comfort with, and trust in, the healthcare system

These are all valid arguments. However, recent research on the role of *teams* points to an even more potent argument.

First, work in the fields of business (1), and of science and technology (2), indicates that results with the highest impact are done by teams, rather than by individuals.

Second, teams that are more diverse solve problems and innovate better (3).

Third, when groups work on problems, the "group intelligence quotient" is, perhaps surprisingly, not a simple function of the sum of the individual group members' IQs. Rather, the "group IQ" is a function of the average social sensitivity of group members, the equality in distribution of conversational turn-taking, and the proportion of females in the group (4).

This literature thus provides compelling scientific evidence that the ISN will be more successful than in the past if we diversify our various groups, particularly by adding women members.

1. Banker, R.D., Field, J.M., Schroeder, R.G., and Sinha, K.K. 1996. Impact of work teams on manufacturing performance: a longitudinal field study. *Academy of Management Journal* 39:24.
2. Wuchty, S., Jones, B.F., and Uzzi, B. 2007. The increasing dominance of teams in production of knowledge. *Science* 316:1036-1039.
3. Page, S.E. 2008. *The Difference: How the Power of Diversity Creates Better Groups, Firms, Schools, and Societies*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 456 pp.
4. Woolley, A.W., Chabris, C.F., Pentland, A., Hashmi, N., and Malone, T.W. 2010. Evidence for a collective intelligence factor in the performance of human groups. *Science* 330:686-688.

Background 2: Specific tools and mechanisms for increasing diversity, particularly the role of women, in an organization

Considerable scholarly work has indicated that relatively simple steps can be taken by an organization to diversify its working groups for the good of the whole. One of the grant-funded projects in this area is that of the "Gender Equity Project" at Hunter College, NY, developed for academia:

<http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity/equitymaterials.html>

A. Learn about gender

Go to: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/gendertutorial>

Take each tutorial

B. Tabulate, analyze, and post benchmark data

Go to:

http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity/benchmark/Preparing_figures.pdf

C. Create departmental equity survey

Go to: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity/equitymaterials.html>

Consult "Guide to creation of departmental equity survey"

This gives overall guidance on what should be in an equity survey and some examples.

Consult "Equity survey"

This is an actual example of the content and form of an equity survey.

D. Meet frequently and informally with women faculty and graduate students

Listen non-defensively

Ask for suggestions

Act on suggestions or explain, after careful thought, why you are not acting

Publicize results

E. Lead

Set standards

Be accountable; make other people accountable

Go to: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity/equitymaterials.html>

Read them all

Go to: <http://www.hunter.cuny.edu/genderequity/relatedlinks.html>

Learn what other ADVANCE schools are doing

F. Keep trying

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