



climate extremes

ARC centre of excellence

**Centre
Equity Plan**

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Objective 2 of the CLEx Strategic Plan is “An outstanding environment for all involved in the Centre”. This Equity Plan outlines the measures we will take to implement the key components of this strategic objective.

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The ARC Centre of Excellence for Climate Extremes is committed to providing an outstanding work and study environment that is inclusive, healthy and respectful. We strive to be an exemplar in tackling inequality and systemic challenges faced by women and other under-represented groups in science.

Equity Objective 1: Recruitment and Retention

Our first equity objective relates to recruiting and retaining an inclusive community of researchers that is reflective of the diversity of the broader community and which capitalises on the strength of varying experiences, perspectives and approaches to solving scientific challenges.

To achieve this, we are committed to the following four action points:

- 1.1 Targeted and gender-neutral recruitment advertising to attract female candidates and those from other under-represented groups.

Recognising that job ads – especially in STEM – have traditionally been written in gendered language¹, we ensure that our advertisements and position descriptions use language that is gender neutral or proactively appealing to women candidates. All positions are advertised as being available flexibly, either part time or full time. We commit to working with our institutional equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) representatives to explore recruitment avenues for Indigenous HDR students and staff.

- 1.2 Raising awareness of unconscious bias for all selection panel members and defining qualities of excellence of the ideal candidate, irrespective of background

In addition to institutional training on unconscious bias, we have developed a Centre primer resource. All selection panel participants are required to complete this primer or an institutional equivalent. Panel chairs should remind panellists that the goal is to choose the best qualified candidate for the position regardless of background. The panel should identify the qualities that would make for a top employee at the outset of shortlisting, prior to the commencement of interviews and during final deliberation. Our goals are to focus on recruiting for excellence and to mitigate against the influence of both conscious and unconscious bias.

- 1.3 Selection panels that are balanced and representative

To the extent practicable, selection panels must include members from a diversity of backgrounds and experience and reflect gender balance.

- 1.4 Highlighting opportunities offered by our institutions and initiatives such as SAGE that assist in career building and retention, especially for women

In order to retain women staff and those from other under-represented groups, we will be proactive in ensuring staff are encouraged to take up a wide range of professional development and leadership opportunities. Opportunities offered or sponsored by our collaborating universities will be the primary focus. The centre will endeavour to contribute to funding of relevant and beneficial professional and leadership development activities.

¹ <http://gap.hks.harvard.edu/evidence-gendered-wording-job-advertisements-exists-and-sustains-gender-inequality>

Equity Objective 2: An Inclusive Centre

2.1 Diversity and culture committee

We have established a Diversity and Culture committee with clear terms of reference to advocate within the centre to ensure the implementation of all elements of this equity plan and to champion Equity Diversity and Inclusion initiatives through the life of the Centre.

2.2 Work/life balance-friendly initiatives

We encourage and promote flexible working arrangements that enable our staff and students to balance their work and personal lives. This includes offering all Centre positions as full or part time contracts, the ability to negotiate work from home arrangements, a flexible approach to daily start and finish times, and the provision of childcare at key centre events such as the annual workshop. We will not hold meetings earlier than 10am, or after 4pm.

2.3 Diversity of speakers at events

We value and encourage diversity in speakers at Centre workshops, professional development courses and research seminars. We also seek to expose staff and students to experts and role models from a wide range of backgrounds. To meet these objectives organisers of all Centre-sponsored events are tasked with creating agendas that aim for gender parity and represent cultural diversity.

2.4 Inclusiveness of all participants at events

All staff and students have a voice at centre meetings, workshops, seminars and conferences. It is the responsibility of convenors and facilitators to ensure all participants have an opportunity to contribute and be heard.

2.5 Indigenous reconciliation action plan

The Equity and Diversity Committee will identify institutional Indigenous Reconciliation Action Plan resources and work to raise awareness of these at each node. The committee will assess the merits of creating a centre-specific plan.

2.6 Outreach Activities

The Centre will actively explore outreach opportunities that enhance the attractiveness of a career in climate science to women and people from other underrepresented groups. Target audiences will include high school and undergraduate students.

Equity Objective 3: Wellbeing and Centre Culture

3.1 Open dialogue around mental and physical health

We will provide a supportive and caring workplace, with wellbeing a foundation of performance and success. Wellbeing and mental health are a regular part of the Centre's dialogue and culture. We raise awareness in a number of ways:

- In welcome messages in our induction pack
- A dedicated agenda item on Centre-wide induction videoconferences
- Regular talks on mental health and wellbeing
- Contact details for all nodes' student counselling services and employee assistant programs available on the centre website

3.2 Multiple staff at each node trained in mental health first aid

We seek to have at least two members of staff at each node (preferably CIs) trained and certified in mental health first aid.

3.3 Leaders setting an example in switching off outside of work hours

We ask our leaders to set an example to junior staff in ways such as discouraging after hours or weekend work or avoiding late night or weekend email exchanges.

3.4 Regular wellbeing tips

The Diversity and Culture committee circulates a weekly 'hump day tip' to raise awareness on issues including equity and diversity initiatives, work-life balance, mental health, acknowledging events such as World Women's Day, etc.

3.5 Initiatives to enhance centre cohesion

The Diversity and Culture committee will recommend initiatives and activities that monitor and enhance the Centre's cohesion and collaboration across nodes and disciplines. The committee will identify barriers that prevent the Centre from successfully functioning as a cohesive entity and recommend remedial strategies to the centre executive group.

3.6 Values and standards of ethical behaviour

The Diversity and Culture Committee is responsible for writing and updating Centre policies around Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and ethical standards of conduct. All workshop participant information packs also include a statement on expected standards of conduct at Centre events.

The Committees is also responsible for communicating a fair, transparent and compassionate reporting mechanism should any member of staff or student experience or witness inappropriate behaviour. A decision-tree flowchart will be developed so that reported instances are dealt with properly according to their severity, with escalation to institutional grievance procedures where appropriate.



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