Event Inclusivity Guidelines
UNSW Science

UNSW Science is committed to increasing diverse representation at conferences, seminars, panels, colloquia, symposia, and other events. As part of the UNSW Science Strategy, Science is committed to lead the best practice of diversity and inclusion, to ensure no disadvantage on the basis of diverse characteristics.

These guidelines describe best practice methods of increasing diverse representation in organisation and delivery of an event. We encourage all involved in events run by members of the UNSW Science community and/or hosted at UNSW Science to take a visible and audible stand to actively embrace diversity and inclusion.

For advice on delivering inclusive events, contact UNSW's Hospitality Team. If you have questions or comments on these guidelines, please contact the Science Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Team.

Note: For the purposes of this document, "Speakers" refers to all guest speakers, keynotes, presenters, and facilitators.

1. Preparing for your event

1.1 Inclusion goals
Have you set equity, diversity, and inclusion goals for your event?

Setting goals and reporting on outcomes is a useful way to monitor your efforts. Such goals provide a clear agenda for the inclusivity of your event. A range of goals can be set. Goals should contribute to the values and behaviours of UNSW, the Science EDI vision and/or UNSW Science Faculty targets.

> Areas where diversity goals can be set are:
> - Gender representation
> - LGBTQIA+ inclusion
> - Cultural diversity of speakers
> - Disability inclusion
> - Flexible working inclusion
> - Indigenous Australian inclusion

Note: Disclosing diversity information may be sensitive for people. It is important to request information in a respectful way. For example: 'UNSW is committed to a fair an inclusive workplace free from discrimination and embrace diversity. For this reason, it is useful for us to know whether people identify with any of the diversity groups below:'

- Ensure that your goals are specific and measurable and that you monitor your progress against them as you plan your event. Ensure that the majority of attendees report being satisfied with the inclusivity of the event as assessed in the event evaluation.

- Examples of inclusion goals:
    - Reaching a more diverse or regional/rural audience through livestream capabilities
    - Gender Representation Goals:
        - Among speakers and audience, aim for a minimum of 40% women and 40% men (with the remaining 20% discretionary).
        - Note: A target of 40% women might be readily achievable in some schools but a considerable challenge in others. It is important to be realistic with the goals that are set.
    - Indigenous Australian Goals:
        - Incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge and learnings into the event content.
        - Include a panel member who identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
    - Disability Inclusion Goals:
        - All aspects of the venue are accessible to those with a disability.
        - Speakers should use microphones which is particularly important for those with hearing impairments.

- Evaluation of Goals
    - One way to track gender representation amongst attendees is during registration. The organising team should monitor responses, and pursue advertising strategies (e.g. targeting gender-focused networks) to rectify imbalances. We recommend the following language for that question:
    How do you describe your gender?
        - a. Man/male
        - b. Woman/female
        - c. Non-binary
        - d. I use a different term [open box]
        - e. Prefer not to answer
    - Similar questions can be repeated in the registration form to document representation from other diverse groups (e.g., LGBTQIA+, Indigenous Australians etc.)

- It is understood that some event speakers are chosen opportunistically because (for example) they are visiting researchers or in the area for other purposes. The purpose of these guidelines is not to discourage such ad hoc events from occurring, but to ensure that inclusion goals are kept in mind when speakers are invited specifically for a UNSW Science event.

- In the case of a series of talks such as the e.g. a School's colloquium or seminar speakers, a goal could be set to ensure that speakers across a given time frame meet a set of inclusion goals.

1.2 Organisers:
Is your planning team diverse?

- A diverse planning team will be better able to anticipate the needs of participants and speakers with diverse backgrounds.

- Seek advice when needed and remember that consultation and self-determination of diversity groups is important. Be conscious of the labour that is spent when people provide advice and guidance: you may wish to compensate or reimburse people for their time.
- For advice on identifying people with diverse backgrounds, contact the relevant diversity champions at UNSW. Each Champion has a Working Group which drives cultural change around equity, diversity and inclusion.
- For advice and guidance on identifying potential Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to contribute to event organisation, contact Nura Gili, UNSW's Indigenous Programs Unit.

1.3 Speakers:
Do your speakers reflect the diverse nature of UNSW Science?

- When inviting speakers, consider the following diversity and inclusion categories: gender, disability, cultural and linguistic background, Indigenous heritage, LGBTIQA+, and flexible work. Consider also intersectionality across these categories.
- Carefully consider speaker selection criteria so that they do not undermine diversity efforts. Placing emphasis on experience and accomplishments rather than seniority can rectify imbalance.
- Avoid inviting speakers who are regularly called upon to appear at events; it may be the case that looking further afield may yield diverse speakers.
- If you have difficulty identifying diverse speakers to invite, seek input from colleagues and/or reach out to relevant professional organisations targeting diversity areas.
- Begin inviting speakers early. This will allow agile shifts to accommodate overall event speaker diversity goals and allow speakers sufficient notice to make travel and/or alternate arrangements for caring responsibilities.
- Brief your speakers on how they can do their part to be inclusive. For example, if the event is being live captioned, short breaks may be required between slide changes. Ask speakers to consider the fonts and colours they use to support attendees with low vision. Consult with your attendees on their needs and communicate these to your speakers.
- The diversity of the chair or host should also be considered. Including current students or trainees as chairs can increase diversity and promote skill development.

1.4 Funding
Is there funding available to support your inclusivity goals?

- When possible, offer subsidies to speakers who may incur extraordinary costs in participating (e.g., due to childcare or other caring responsibilities).
- Offer Equity Scholarships for attendees who may not have access to travel funds and/or to help facilitate audience-oriented EDI goals.
- Consider whether it is appropriate to offer an incentive for speakers' participation. If speakers are performing the same role, then be equitable with incentives.

1.5 Scheduling
Is your event scheduled at a time and date that maximises ease of attendance?

- Consider keeping in line with UNSW's Regular Team Meetings Hours Policy (i.e., holding your event between the hours of 9.30am and 4pm).
- Try to avoid scheduling an event on religious and culturally significant holidays.
- Understand that holding your event during School Holidays may present challenges for parents of school-aged children.

1.6 Venue
Is the venue accessible?

- Hold your event in a venue where the stage is accessible.
- All of your attendees should have access to a toilet. Remember this should include an all-gender toilet.
    - Access a UNSW campus map marked with accessible toilets here.
- Consider utilising audio amplification, even in relatively small spaces, to ensure that all audience members can hear speakers. If feasible and the need exists amongst your audience, employ an Auslan interpreter or pursue live captioning options.

- To support inclusion of those who work flexibly, enable remote access and participation in events (e.g., live streaming).
    - Funding permitting, live streaming can be organised through UNSW Hospitality and Events Audio Visual Team.
- If the event is live-streamed or recorded, ensure you advise participants before registration for privacy purposes.
- Free web video conferencing can be utilised using Microsoft Teams or Zoom for up to 250 users.
- Consider providing an onsite creche or reimbursing care costs for those with caring responsibilities. Example of organisations that can provide onsite creche services include Kidzklub and Abrachild.
- If requested by your speakers or audience, when feasible,
    - provide a quiet room that is accessible and near the main meeting/conference room.
    - employ an Auslan interpreter or pursue live captioning options.
- If your event is being live streamed or captioned, ensure you test your technology thoroughly prior to the event and have help desk phone numbers on hand.

1.7 Catering
Are you providing catering options that are inclusive?

- Consider offering culturally diverse meal options.
    - For events hosted at UNSW, contact UNSW Hospitality for options.
- Prepare, or ask your caterer to prepare, labels for all food and beverages to assist people with dietary requirements.
- If catering is a large part of the event, ask for dietary requirements during registration.
- Provide a variety of meal options, including food that is easy to eat without utensils. Ensure catering staff are briefed and able to help where appropriate.
- Consider sustainability in catering provision. For more guidance refer to the UNSW Science Sustainability Event Guidelines (under development).

1.8 Welcome to Country
Have you considered arranging a Welcome to Country?

- Consult with your local elders group or Lands Council or cooperative about a Welcome to Country to determine if one is appropriate.
- Refer to Nura Gili's Protocols for Welcome to Country for assistance. Noting that performing a Welcome to Country is usually not a free service and prices can vary depending on the type of welcome required.

- If you have not arranged a Welcome to Country, consider asking the host to give an Acknowledgement of Country.

1.9 Planning inclusive content
Will the content of your event embrace the diversity of UNSW Science and beyond?

- Explore ways to creatively integrate diverse stories and issues into your event such as case studies, panel questions, and research. These may touch on diversity areas such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, LGBTIQA+, and more.
- Consult with the [Science Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Team](#) for advice.

2. Advertising your event

2.1 Marketing and communications
Are the visual and textual aspects of your marketing and communications inclusive?

- Be mindful of visual representation of diversity when advertising your event.
- Add links to the following on your event website, in event communications, and/or in messages to your speakers.
  - [UNSW Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Policy](#)
  - [UNSW Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy](#)
- Ensure invitations and communications are accessible. Recommended font is [Atkinson hyperlegible](#) (use Arial if you cannot access this font) and size 14 point or larger.
- Provide details of parking, public transport, and drop-off points with accessibility in mind.
  - Access a UNSW campus map marked with accessible parking [here](#).
- Use inclusive, person first language to refer to individuals with disability. Ie. "people with disabilities" rather than "disabled people" or "the disabled".
- Where possible, use gender neutral terms such as they, them, their, partner, significant others; avoid the use of binary gender language.
- Consider including the UNSW Science equity, diversity and inclusion vision statement on your invitation.
  > *"The UNSW Faculty of Science aims to provide an equitable place of work and study that will stimulate innovation, productivity, and progress and will enable staff and students to realise their potential regardless of background. We hold that diversity is required to foster an environment that produces robust, credible and pioneering science of global impact and trains the next generation of scientists.*
  >
  > *UNSW Science believes that deliberately fair, equitable, and inclusive practice can serve to realise this vision. UNSW Science commits to reducing barriers that impede equity, diversity, and inclusion via implementation of initiatives and practices that will benefit staff and students alike."*

2.2 RSVPs or Event Registration
Are your RSVPs or Event Registration set up to request information that supports the inclusivity goals of your event?

- When inviting people to your event, ensure that you ask if they have any specific requirements and/or let attendees know who they should contact to request any accessibility and accommodation requirements.

- o Example questions to include on the RSVP:
  - Do you require an accessibility related measure in order to attend this event? This might include accessible parking, sign language interpretation, captioning, or any other accessibility-related measure.
  - Do you have specific dietary requirements?
- Ensure you include questions that capture the diversity of the audience which align to the goals set during planning.

3. Running your event

3.1 Room and venue setup
Have ensured signage and room setup promotes accessibility?

- Ensure wayfinding materials, including signage, are easy to read and in locations visible to those approaching the venue from accessible routes (e.g., not just the stairway).
- Remove trip hazards and ensure stage and audience spaces are wheelchair accessible.
- Ensure the room access is not limited by staff card access. If so, speak with EM to have the access unlocked during the event or have people available to mind the doors for entry.

3.2 Setting up for inclusive online meetings

- Ensure your face is well-lit (facing a window or a light, not silhouetted against it), and that your whole face is visible including your mouth – this is vital for people with hearing impairment.
- If your image on the screen carries a label identifying you, make sure it has your name and not just your university zID. You might give your name when speaking but this may not be audible to all participants.
- Wear a headset if you have one as it enhances the clarity of speech.
- If you are chairing, do a quick round of introductions at the beginning. This will obviously depend on the size or regularity of the meeting but it's a good idea so that anyone with a visual impairment can recognize who is speaking during the discussion.
- If you are chairing, remember to repeat or paraphrase questions or requests from the floor just in case others are unable to hear.
- Remind participants that Zoom and Microsoft Teams both have a closed caption function (not automatic for all users though) which may also be useful.
- Circulate papers ahead of time where possible. This is particularly important for visually impaired participants using screen readers who may not be able to 'read' the document and follow a spoken discussion at the same time.
- Ask participants to mute their microphone to minimise background noise. As a host or producer of virtual events, you can mute all participants automatically.
- Do not require people to turn their videos on when they are attending from home as this can be regarded as an invasion of privacy.

3.3 Opening the event
Have you prepared your event opening with equity, diversity and inclusion considerations?

- Open your event with a Welcome to Country (if previously arranged) or Acknowledgement of Country. Refer to Nura Gili's Protocols for Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome to Country for assistance.
- Ensure that the host announces location of bathrooms (especially noting if accessible bathrooms are elsewhere).

- For virtual events, post the meeting guidelines in the chat at the beginning and have the host direct attendees to that post.
  - Examples may include: courteous language reminder, how to ask questions, mute microphones when not speaking, whether the event is recorded and how to access the closed captioning.
- Consider asking your host to point out a zero tolerance policy for disrespectful language and behaviour at your event, framed around embracing the UNSW Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy and the UNSW Sexual Misconduct Prevention and Response Policy.

3.4 Promoting inclusion
Have you clearly conveyed the inclusivity values of your event to speakers and the audience?

- Encourage the host and all speakers to:
  - Use the microphone to ensure that all audience members can hear the presenters
  - Describe visual information verbally.
  - Use inclusive language regarding gender, sexual orientation, cultural heritage.
- Display the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag when and where appropriate to do so. Consult with Nura Gili for advice.
- After the event, with the permission of the speaker(s), disseminate a summary (and recording, where possible) for those who could not attend.

3.5 During an online meeting

- Nominate one person to monitor the 'chat' function so that people can ask questions or request clarification via chat if they have not heard a key point. This works particularly well for large meetings where there is a lot of information being shared.
- If a participant is using a sign language interpreter, remember that the interpreter needs to hear the meeting but it is the participant who should be visible, and that their response will be delayed as it needs to go through the interpreter.
- Allow time for responses. Being online can make certain disabilities invisible to the group. It is easier to miss people whose impairments (e.g. dexterity issues, respiratory difficulties, use of mouth controls, interpreters or closed captions) make it harder for them to respond rapidly to questions or to break into a discussion. Ensure participants are given adequate time or alternative means to respond.
- In the interests of inclusion, invite participants to contribute either individually or by a general invitation.
- Allow short breaks in longer meetings and invite participants to feel able to turn off their video during any break if necessary. Some physical and neurological conditions make it harder for a participant to sit in a chair facing a laptop for the duration of a meeting.

4. Evaluating your event

4.1 Collecting feedback
Did your audience feel that your event was inclusive?

- Collect feedback from attendees about the inclusivity of the event. Did the participants feel included? Where there any barriers to inclusion?
- Such feedback can be collected informally, in a targeted manner, and/or via a survey sent to speakers and audience members.

4.2 Assessing your goals
What learnings can you take away from planning and running this event with inclusivity in mind?

- What changes would you make to improve inclusion in your next event? Consider making your findings publicly available, where appropriate.
- Refer back to the EDI goals set at the start of the event planning process. Did you meet your goals?
- Identify what worked well and what could be improved. Share your findings with the Science EDI team science.edi@unsw.edu.au.

5. Further Resources

Department of External Relations
- UNSW Accessibility Guidelines for Events **(Appendix A)**

Australian Network on Disability
- https://www.and.org.au/

Diversity Council Australia
- https://www.dca.org.au/

Nura Gili Protocol
- http://www.nuragili.unsw.edu.au/atcandwtc

York University Canada Inclusion Lens: Event Management Tool
- http://inclusionlens.yorku.ca/

500 Women Scientists
- https://500womenscientists.org/inclusive-scientific-meetings

Union of Concerned Scientists Guide on Event Accessibility
- https://blog.ucsusa.org/science-blogger/how-to-make-professional-conferences-more-accessible-for-disabled-people-guidance-from-actual-disabled-scientists