



RNA Canada RNA

Guidelines for the incorporation of EDI principles in RNA Canada ARN committees

These guidelines align with the **RNA Canada ARN - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy**.

1. Guidelines for the incorporation of EDI principles in RNA Canada ARN committees

RNA Canada ARN values the benefits that result from ensuring diversity in its committees. Diverse identities, positions, and perspectives help in setting more comprehensive objectives. To promote inclusivity and equity, increase our consideration of diverse ideas, reduce groupthink, increase innovation, improve decision-making and truly represent our membership, diversity of the committees of RNA Canada ARN should be a guiding principle. Diversity of the leadership and of the committees of RNA Canada demonstrates its commitment at all levels of the organization.

2. Definitions

- i. **Diversity** is about the variety of unique dimensions, identities, qualities and characteristics individuals possess along with other identity factors. Diversity includes but is not limited to the following elements: gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, ability, experience, expertise, career stage, geography.
- ii. **Equity** is defined as the removal of systemic barriers (e.g. unconscious bias, discrimination, racism, sexism, ableism, homophobia, etc.), enabling all individuals to have unbiased opportunity to access and benefit from RNA Canada ARN membership, programming and events.
- iii. **Inclusion** is defined as the practice of ensuring that all individuals are valued and respected for their contributions and are supported equitably in a culturally safe environment.

iv. **Groupthink** occurs when a group of people reaches a consensus without critical reasoning or rational evaluation of the consequences or alternatives. Groupthink is based on a common desire not to upset the balance of a group of people.

3. Benefits for committees that respect EDI principles

- i. Ensure representation of the broad RNA Canada ARN community.
- ii. Better consider perspectives and anticipate concerns of the entire RNA Canada ARN membership.
- iii. Increase creativity and innovation in RNA Canada ARN management and activities.
- iv. Uphold EDI principles that are core values of the organization.
- v. Attract and engage talented individuals to our committees.
- vi. Ensure that members of the community feel included in RNA Canada ARN decision-making.

4. Committee member recruitment

- i. Participation in RNA Canada ARN committees should be open to all qualified members of appropriate career stages and should be advertised as such.
- ii. Committee recruitment methods should be transparent.
- iii. Members should be informed of committee participation opportunities by advertising in a wide manner, at RNA Canada ARN meetings, through social media, in newsletters and by email to the entire RNA Canada ARN membership to ensure equity, inclusivity and wide awareness of opportunities.
- iv. Under-represented groups should be contacted and informed about opportunities to participate in a pro-active manner.
- v. Calls for participation should be written in both official languages using inclusive, unbiased, ungendered vocabulary.
- vi. Each open call should have clear criteria defining the requirements of the committee.
- vii. Applicants should be asked for their track record related to EDI. They should be encouraged to identify their strengths and experiences in increasing EDI in their current and previous research environments.

5. Selection of committee members amongst candidates

- i. Members of committees involved in the selection of future members should have followed training on unconscious bias. Such training is available from the tri-council. [NSERC - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion \(nserc-crsng.gc.ca\)](https://nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Equity_Diversity_and_Inclusion/Pages/Equity_Diversity_and_Inclusion.aspx)
[Equity, diversity and inclusion resources - CIHR \(cihr-irsc.gc.ca\)](https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/en/equity-diversity-inclusion/Pages/Equity_Diversity_and_Inclusion.aspx)
- ii. To select new members, committees should consider the make-up of the current members of their committee and the make-up of the entire RNA Canada ARN membership. This information should be made available by the Membership & Analytics Committee.
- iii. Diversity in characteristics such as, but not limited to, gender, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, ability, career stage, geography and as appropriate for the committee, experience, expertise, and activities should be maximized as possible when selecting new members amongst all candidates who postulated.
- iv. Experience in promoting EDI should be valued.
- v. Candidates who are not selected should be treated with courtesy and respect by providing responses as swiftly as possible.
- vi. Overseeing the adherence to the guidelines is the responsibility of the Executive Committee.

6. Inclusive meetings

- i. Committee meetings should be scheduled to ensure inclusivity and flexibility. Considerations should include time zones of committee members, work-related and outside obligations of members, holidays of all cultures.
- ii. The chair of the committee and all members should ensure that meetings are respectful and inclusive, and all members are heard.

These guidelines have been developed based on guidelines from

Doctors Nova Scotia:

https://doctorsns.com/sites/default/files/Governance%20Files/Board_of_Directors/Board_Governance/Guidelines_Effectively%20Diversifying%20the%20Board%20and%20Committees_FINAL.pdf

Canada Research Chairs program:

https://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/program-programme/equity-equite/best_practices-pratiques_examplaires-eng.aspx

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