This is what was found by ESC, GHSC, VSC at the USGS on Hiring and/or Admissions Policies, as well as what the pod would propose to change and improve.

Note: We acknowledge this information is not always accessible to students and even staff. If you do not have access to this information, please reflect on your own experience and outline what admissions and/or hiring should be like to foster a diverse and inclusive community.

1. What EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) statement¹ is included in a standard job or admissions advertisement? Are there other inclusion statements and resources publicly available²?
   - Statements included at the bottom of all Federal job advertisements:
     - **Equal Employment Opportunity Policy:**
       - “The United States Government does not discriminate in employment on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy and gender identity), national origin, political affiliation, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, genetic information, age, membership in an employee organization, retaliation, parental status, military service, or other non-merit factor.”
     - **Reasonable Accommodation Policy:**
       - “Federal agencies must provide reasonable accommodation to applicants with disabilities where appropriate. Applicants requiring reasonable accommodation for any part of the application process should follow the instructions in the job opportunity announcement. For any part of the remaining hiring process, applicants should contact the hiring agency directly. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.
       - “A reasonable accommodation is any change to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done that enables an individual with a disability to apply for a job, perform job duties or receive equal access to job benefits.
       - “Under the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, federal agencies must provide reasonable accommodations when:
         - An applicant with a disability needs an accommodation to have an equal opportunity to apply for a job.

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² https://careers.whoi.edu/opportunities/diversity-inclusion/
⁵ https://www.brandeis.edu/diversity/dei-recruitment-hiring/rubric-for-evaluating-diversity-statements.html
An employee with a disability needs an accommodation to perform the essential job duties or to gain access to the workplace.

An employee with a disability needs an accommodation to receive equal access to benefits, such as details, training, and office-sponsored events.

- “You can request a reasonable accommodation at any time during the application or hiring process or while on the job. Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis.

- Several diversity and inclusion policies are available on the public-facing USGS Employment webpage (https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital/employment-and-information-center), under the heading “Building a Diverse Workforce and Inclusive Work Environment”
  
  - **USGS Non-Discrimination Policy**
    - Second paragraph of this says: “As USGS Director, I want to affirm my commitment to equal employment opportunity and non-discrimination. Seeking individuals with the best talent and broadest experience, the USGS is driven to ensure that every qualified person has an equal opportunity to compete and contribute their full potential.”
    - This was signed by Jim Reilly in 2018. Will there be any changes to this language with a new director? What does “broadest experience” mean? This is subtle language that may or may not limit diversity inclusion. What does this mean? Experience as a person or professionally? Sometimes professional experience is less available to underrepresented communities.
  
  - **USGS Diversity Statement**
  
  - **USGS Anti-Harassment Information and Policy**
  
  - **USGS Diversity and Inclusion Plan**
  
  - **Diversity Council**
  
  - **Reasonable Accommodations Policy and Procedures**

- [Link to Dave Applegate’s EEO statement](#)

- [Link to USGS Earthquake Hazards Program mission statement](#)

- Question: are we living up to this statement, in terms of delivering products that communicate to and meet the needs of diverse users? Is terminology inclusive enough, or does it need to be modified?

**2a. Where are advertisements posted or sent?**

- All advertisements are posted on USAjobs (www.usajobs.gov), at a minimum. This is a requirement.
Advertisements are also sometimes posted to message boards, listservs, scientific societies, professional associations, social media accounts etc., but the responsibility falls to the hiring committee both to discover the myriad possibilities, and to take action to post the announcement in multiple places. There is significant variability in where different jobs are posted.

- Professional societies’ websites and publications:
  - Eos -- https://eos.org/jobs-support
  - GSA -- https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/Publications/Info_Services/Advertising/GSA/Advertising/Rate-Classifieds.aspx#rates
  - AGU -- https://employers.agu.org/
  - SACNAS -- https://www.sacnas.org/take-action/find-or-post-a-job/
  - NABG -- http://www.nabg-us.org/job-posting-blog
  - Association for Women Geoscientists (AWG) -- https://awg-jobs.careerwebsite.com/
  - Seismological Society of America (SSA) -- https://www.seismosoc.org/jobs/post-job/
  - Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) newsletter
  - Society of Women Engineers -- https://careers.swe.org/
  - National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) -- https://www.nsbe.org/home.aspx
  - American Geosciences Institute -- https://www.americangeosciences.org/jobs/
  - Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) -- https://jobs.ieee.org/

- Listservs:
  - Volcano Listserv -- VOLCANO@LISTS.ASU.EDU
  - IRIS (seismology) Listserv -- http://ds.iris.edu/message-center/topic/jobs/
  - SCEC (Southern California Earthquake Center) Listserv -- https://www.scec.org/
  - Gilbert Club (geomorphology-related listserv) -- mailto:gilbertclub.lists@berkeley.edu
  - Geo-Tectonics listserv (GEO-TECTONICS@JISCMAIL.AC.UK)
  - UNAVCO (geodesy) -- mailto:unav_all@postal.unavco.org
  - Earthworm “Seismic Software” Community Forum -- https://groups.google.com/g/earthworm_forum
Disaster_grads listserv, hosted by the Natural Hazards Center
Earth Science Jobs Network (ES_Jobs_Net) -- hosted by the Earth Science Women’s Network (but available to all genders)
https://mailman.ucar.edu/mailman/listinfo/es_jobs_net

Social media accounts:
- “USGS Volcanoes” on Facebook and Twitter
- “USGS Earthquakes” Twitter account (@USGS_Quakes)
- “GeoJobs” Twitter account (@EarthSci_jobs)
- “Gneiss jobs for geos” Twitter account (@nonschistyjobs)

Commercial websites:
- Handshake: Instead of having to post a job advertisement on each individual college/university’s career center website, can post to this free one-stop-shop for advertising jobs to many participating college/university career centers (https://joinhandshake.com/).
- Posting on one’s own LinkedIn feed – a drawback to this is that it targets people who are within one’s network. A general advertisement on LinkedIn costs money.
- Indeed, Monster, Jobvertise, ZipRecruiter, etc. -- automated, free websites that crawl USGS listings and sometimes post the jobs.
- Earthworks-jobs.com

Word-of-mouth is very commonly used, but this preferentially targets people who are known within just a few degrees of separation of those already within USGS.

Additional efforts that could be made:
- Targeted outreach to HBCU and other MSI, including nearby community colleges, two-year schools, and other schools that may have diverse student pools.
- Attend conferences of minority-serving societies (e.g., SACNAS, NABG) and advertise job openings, internship opportunities, etc.
- Broadcast job advertisements to a pre-determined list of BIPOC-serving organizations – this could be done by administrative staff as a routine practice, rather than the current practice of relying on each hiring committee to compile a list and send out notices individually.
- Try to add language stating we value diversity and inclusion at USGS (in addition to the boilerplate EEO statement) when we advertise jobs – it is unclear what is allowed under the current rules, this would need to meet OPM approval
- We could consider ranking the places where we advertise jobs, in terms of their potential to reach a diverse applicant pool
2b. Are there other strategies for reaching applicants for hiring and/or admissions, e.g. job fairs, showcases?

The USGS could do more to reach out specifically to MSIs with our job/intern opportunities. Jobs could be posted specifically to minority-serving geologic organizations’ job boards (e.g., the NABG website Job Postings blog [http://www.nabg-us.org/job-posting-blog]). USGS could send representatives to NABG, SACNAS, and other conferences.

When sending job announcements out to BIPOC organizations, it is important to have a personal connection (via prior outreach). We should invite people from these organizations to interact with individual science centers, give seminars, and offer to give seminars at those orgs. To increase our connections to minority scientists who may be candidates for future hires we could: 1) provide travel funds for USGS scientists to visit minority serving institutions (MSI) in order to give seminars (this may fall under the broader effort from the ESC Equity Inclusion Diversity (EID) hiring group to build collaborations with MSI) and 2) make travel funds available for minority students and scientists to visit the USGS and give seminars.

The USGS Mendenhall Postdoc program ([https://www.usgs.gov/centers/mendenhall](https://www.usgs.gov/centers/mendenhall)) could consider increasing the number of available postdoc positions, and make them about broader topics related to earthquake science/hazards. Currently, Mendenhall projects are so specific that they often deter applicants who don’t have the same specialized experience in that topic. The USGS could consider putting inclusive language on the Mendenhall website for prospective applicants ie. “No direct experience with topic XXXX is needed to apply”, or “contact the research advisors if you want to learn more about the topic, you don’t need to have a project in mind yet, we can meet with you and help you come up with ideas for your proposal”.

The USGS could also improve efforts to recruit veterans who come from a more diverse representation of the U.S. compared to the geoscience community.

Other types of outreach the USGS currently engages in includes:

- VSC has list of ~50 BIPOC dominant organizations where job advertisements can be broadcast.
- USGS has a diversity internal website for recruitment (must be on VPN) with a list of org’s to send job ad’s to minorities + BIPOC orgs.
- ESC has participated in a virtual job fair – San Francisco regional federal job fair – where they introduced USGS and advertised open positions
• GHSC has a Co. School of Mines Job fair table that is used when hiring summer interns; ESC is starting a similar program to hire summer interns – big recruitment for students who are sometimes retained
• Learn lessons and benefit from wisdom that Eleanor Snow from USGS YES (Youth and Education in Science) has gained over the years. The pipeline program (part of USGS YES) is a collaboration and memorandum of understanding with Minority Serving Institutions: https://www.usgs.gov/science-support/osqi/youth-education-science/college-pipeline-programs
• See Water Mission Area web page: https://waterdata.usgs.gov/blog/hiring-spring-2021/
• USGS supervisor toolkit: https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital/supervisors-toolkit
• USGS Hiring, Recruitment, Staffing: https://www.usgs.gov/about/organization/science-support/human-capital/hiring-recruitment-and-staffing
• ESC just advertised for their new summer student intern positions (following the process set up by GHSC) to area MSIs like Cal State schools, community colleges, and made liberal use of Handshake. Alicia Gomez has been especially helpful with these postings, using Handshake (really necessary as many schools use this system), and our internship program in general (Alicia Gomez, Human Resources Specialist, Policy and Special Projects Team, agomez@usgs.gov, Phone (303) 236-9588, Cell (303) 842-7122).

3a. What are the requirements for an applicant, e.g. letters of recommendations, fees/test scores/grades?

There are multiple required components for USGS applications through USAjobs that without, the application will not be considered. This includes basic identification information such as name and citizenship (for all USGS positions only U.S. citizens are considered) as well as unofficial transcripts, a USAjobs formatted resume, and a skill questionnaire.

For career competitive positions, the submitted resume must include details that an academic CV or standard resume might not include. This includes salary, hours/week worked, supervisor contact information for each position, a list of professional reference contact information, as well as specific callouts to the desired qualifications listed in the job call. These “key words” are what HR will look for to assess the applicants eligibility for the position. Many positions require an unofficial transcript from an “accredited college/university” at the time of application, and an official transcript prior to hiring. Cover letters are often preferred, even though they are not explicitly asked for.
USGS applications also require a self assessment of work experience and skills. There is an option for a “selective factor” that hiring managers can use to get people through (e.g., applicants must have specific experience or skills). The self assessment of skill level is compared to the average non-expert—not the average geoscientist. Those who know to “exaggerate” their self ranking get a high enough score to pass the initial HR screening. Thus, many applicants—especially first time applicants—mistakenly underrate themselves and do not make the initial cut. Applicants are able to “preview” the applicant questionnaire/assessment. Savvy applicants will preview the questions to see what qualities they recruiters are looking for and make sure to include them as “key words” in their resume—e.g. list relevant software experience. A new option for the hiring supervisor includes the ability to add a layer of questions that are not multiple choice. For specialized positions such as research “RGE” jobs, these additional written narrative essays are required (sometimes called “KSA”: Knowledge, Skills, Abilities).

If the applicant makes it past the initial HR review, they are “referred” to the selection committee. A reduced pool of 5-10 applicants (although this is variable with position) is passed to the selection committee, who has expertise in the subject-area. At this point, references may be contacted and it is preferred to call the references rather than written recommendations. All contacted references are asked an identical set of questions. For positions that involve field work, a physical is required prior to hiring (after selection) – the cost of which is reimbursed by the science center.

Common pitfalls for applicants include:

- Not rating themselves high enough on the questionnaire/skill assessment
- Not including the required information on the resume
- Not including direct callouts on the resume to skills mentioned in the questionnaire/skill assessment
- Not submitting transcripts
- Not submitting a cover letter even if it is not explicitly asked for

It remains unclear if including potentially biasing information (such as race or sexual identity) in a cover letter will exclude the applicant. We are working on clarifying this potential miscommunication with HR to determine what (if any) information should not be included in a cover letter.

3b. Is providing any of these a potential barrier that could be further lowered or removed? Are there any problematic questions asked?
Federal job hiring is very different from private sector hiring, and many applicants are not aware of the difference. Barriers exist where some people know intel as to how to adjust survey answers and/or include cover letters (for example) when not asked – this can help or hurt the applicant. We want the best person in a job and not just the best person who successfully navigated USAJOBS. Some issues we found that come with providing certain types of documents include:

- **Resume issues**
  - Federal resumes should be thorough and complete vs. private sector prefers 1-page resume
  - Resumes can be reflections of privilege (e.g. unpaid internships, attendance at top name schools, volunteer positions, …)

- **Transcript issues**
  - Issues with transcript requirements on USAJOBS
  - Requirement to submit transcripts for federal jobs
  - If applicant forgets to upload all transcripts to USAJOBS, or somehow misses the deadline, their application is never even considered. No second chances, which can eliminate otherwise well suited applicants unnecessarily.
  - HR often counts specific types and number of math classes on the transcript, to determine if an applicant qualifies for a specific type of job. E.g. Computer Scientist vs. IT Specialist have different degree requirements.
    - Rethink education requirements and specific degrees for certain levels of jobs?
  - Should the PhD degree really be a requirement for an entry level research position? Especially given the biases and structural inequities in academia and graduate school admissions. Can USGS offer a career path that starts at entry level (e.g. after college degree) and work one’s way up to a research position?
  - Looking at grades alone can be an issue as sometimes that (less than stellar grades?) can be a reflection of things happening in the applicant’s personal life for example

- **Deadlines and hiring timeline**
  - Strict deadlines without second chances;
  - Hiring can take much longer in federal government compared to private sector.
  - Writing an HR/USAJOBS friendly resume – which includes dates, salaries, phone number of supervisors, and often including “key words” listed in the job call.

- **Grade (GS) level limits on positions**
  - Might limit upward mobility in one’s career.
Maybe this is an OPM/DOI rule, but if a current USGS employee wants to move beyond their FPL (Full Performance Level) in their current position, they must openly compete for a new position on USAJOBS.

- Is this the best/fairest way to promote internal employees, or might this cause issues with retention?
- Further, a relatively recent change is that Supervisory positions typically don’t have options for promotion (e.g. or or two grades are advertised, and once hired into that grade, that is the FPL)

- **Interview Questions**
  - Why not provide applicants the interview questions before the interview? The interview then becomes a measure of what the candidate really knows or thinks about a topic, rather than a test of the applicant’s ability to “think on their feet”
  - Follow-up questions based on their answers can help measure their ability to respond quickly

- **Written narrative “KSA” essays for research and other specialized positions:**
  - Writing these can be very time-consuming. USAJOBS website should provide more explicit guidance about any limits on length of each answer, and style of answer (paragraph vs. bullet points)
  - Successful applicants have reached out to others in their network to read over their KSA essays, or to provide guidance on what the hiring committee is looking for. Not everyone has this advantage. Can someone from HR or the science center provide more systematic guidance to all applicants?

- **Capping the number of applicants**
  - Can close the job before they even get into the list serv can be a barrier
  - Keeping the position open for a longer time on USAJOBS can cast a wider net of applicants

- **Here are some “tips to apply” on USAJOBS to help applicants but there could be more:**
  - [https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/how-to/](https://www.usajobs.gov/Help/how-to/)
  - [https://www.usajobs.gov/Notification/Events](https://www.usajobs.gov/Notification/Events) - Webinars on interviewing, writing a federal resume, and other relevant topics are periodically scheduled

4a. **How are applicants/applications evaluated? Is that process and/or rubric public?**

Currently, this process is not public, and we don’t have a standard rubric. It also depends on the type of position and the individual hiring manager.

First, HR certifies candidates are qualified based upon individuals’ “self evaluation” ranking, which is based on the multiple choice questions answered when filling out the on-line application on USAJobs. Applicants are able to take their time with the on-line application,
and can review the self-evaluation questions before applying. Based on these self evaluations qualified candidates are ranked and a list of most qualified (the “cert”) are sent to hiring officials. HR does not necessarily look at cover letters, letters or recommendation, etc. Unfortunately, at this step many candidates can be excluded because they did not submit all of the expected information. For example, many people are excluded because they have not submitted all of the requested documentation, especially educational transcripts. There is a new option for establishment of the “cert”, called a “second level assessment” - a panel of subject matter experts look over the qualified applicants in order to promote a group forward for hiring. Sometimes, especially for Research positions, after eligible/qualified candidates are identified, then there is a ratings panel established with subject matter experts who review written responses to a number of questions. These questions are provided to only the qualified applicants after HR has done the first screening. The ratings panel ranks candidates based on the submitted application materials and the written responses to questions, then forwards to the hiring committee via HR. The ratings panel and later hiring committee are typically different groups of people. Hiring officials then have a couple of options for how to proceed. Interviews are not always required, but are usually done. They can be phone interviews, virtual video interviews, and/or in-person interviews, but it is important that all applicants are treated the same during this process. Some interview questions can be framed asking about diversity experience, working in environments with diverse populations, or increasing diversity in past job experiences.

The supervisor/hiring committee identifies the preferred candidate based upon all materials submitted with the application plus interviews and reference checks. HR handles the discussions about pay, benefits, start date, etc… after the hiring official informs HR of the selected candidate.

Depending on disability status, veterans can get extra points in the ranking when applying through a DEU (general public) application. Veterans preference rules are complicated and HR is the best source to answer these questions. Sometimes if enough veterans apply, HR may not send along applications of highly ranked non-veteran applications.

Current federal employees can also apply through a MP (merit promotion) application, which gives them another avenue to get through HR that is not open to the general public.

For job applications, USA Jobs has a standard list of questions, in addition to the self-evaluation questions, but all racial or disability identifiers are optional and are stripped from applications prior to HR review. Names are not stripped from documentation, and would be the only factor (other than in-person/video interviews) that could be used to assume BIPOC.
It would be really nice to see a cultural change, where the HR person reviewing applications and developing the "Cert" consulted much more openly with the hiring manager or at least someone more knowledgeable in the subdiscipline. This is rarely a cooperative process, and thus people unfamiliar with the discipline end up making (often flawed) judgement calls.

4b. What kind of biases are introduced in this process and what strategies are used to address these, e.g. removing applicant names?

Almost certainly, there are biases involved in reviewing applicants and comparing one against another. Efforts are made to eliminate or limit these biases and/or the impacts they might have on the hiring process. Little in our process addresses the idea that "resumes are accumulators of privilege"… Among the kinds of things that can introduce bias are:

- Requiring past salary history
- Non-citizens are generally not eligible for jobs with the federal government
- Perhaps names should be removed from applicant files so as to limit biases based on ethnicity.
- Candidates with degrees from well known, expensive schools might be favored
- People with accents may be discriminated against
- Unintentional biases sometimes exist for example when recruiting for positions is from a limited number of schools, which may have a less diverse community
- Simply being familiar with the hiring process or knowing people who have successfully gone through the process gives one a "leg up"

Approaches that might be taken to limit the influence of biases include:

- Removing names from applicant files
- Offering assistance to those who have trouble with the online application, or provide those who submit an incomplete application the opportunity to correct deficiencies (like missing academic transcripts)
- Asking all hiring committee members to take unconscious bias training, and discuss these topics at the beginning of the process
- Ask committee members to not seek out candidate information on social media
- Do not ask candidates for prior salary history
- The office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity is asking for hiring officials to send job packages to them so that they can help with DEI initiatives in hiring:

  gs_deo_recruitment@usgs.gov
5. Who is on selection committees and who makes the final decisions? Who interacts with the applicants?

- Selection committee (4-5 people) tends to be composed of subject matter expert(s) most closely aligned with the new position and supervisor.
  - Committee often works towards a consensus to make a recommendation to the hiring official.
  - It's important that anyone vested in the applicant is involved in the interview process. The selecting official usually, but not always, participates in interviews.
  - At a minimum, committee members should all have recently taken implicit bias training and discussed unconscious bias as a group.
  - Final decision is by the selecting official – often this is the supervisor. For ESC permanent hires, must get approval of the hiring decision by Center Director.

- During in person interviews there are sometimes other colleagues outside USGS (such as from partner institutions) that can also interview the candidate. This can give our hiring committees a broader perspective, and has been done in the past.
  - There is a nuance in this – e.g. they may be able to talk to the applicant, and provide feedback to the selection committee, but not able to cast an official vote.
  - We could work on diversifying the selection committee – even if they are a non-expert, they can make a positive impact on reviewing the application.
  - Can we extend the hiring committee, with decision making power, to a more broad net – beyond the USGS, to partner institutions and stakeholders?

- Reference checks are an important part of the process, but not consistently done.

- Should current USGS employees take the candidate to lunch?
  - For some openings, such as research positions, the in-person interview can take several hours - since it involves giving a seminar presentation, then meeting with at least one group of people, and sometimes separate meetings with Center leadership. However, for other openings, in-person interviews are only 2-3 hours long so there is no need to take the candidate to lunch.
  - If so, should people not involved in the hiring process (such as postdocs?) be the ones who take the candidate to lunch?
  - What difference does it make what table manners are like, or how friendly the person is during a meal?
  - There is also the risk of homophily – preferring candidates who are more like yourself due to shared hobbies or other reasons completely unrelated to the skills required to do the job.

- Should we consider having an outside independent observer to do an “equity check” on the selection process, to make sure the interview was conducted fairly and consistently?
Might this be a USGS employee who doesn’t have any decision making power, but is only there to observe and do quality control?

- ESC hiring guide: Remind interviewers about “Do’s” and “Don’ts” before each interview (treat each candidate the same; don’t ask illegal questions about personal information or make decisions based on such information). People don’t serve on a hiring panel very often, so it’s good to have refresher training.
  - Do’s:
    - Treat all applicants the same and with respect. Ask each applicant the same questions; follow up questions are OK. Encourage them to ask questions about the Center and the position for which they are applying.
    - All panel members should take unconscious bias training.
    - Prior to the first interview, discuss with panel members general approaches, Dos and Don’ts
    - Seek to remove any biases from the evaluation
    - Document the process – all panel members should take and keep notes (which are PII and should be retained for 2 years)
    - Feel free to include work tasks as part of the interview process
    - Feel free to send all applicants the interview questions beforehand
    - Provide applicants a good sense of what the position will entail. Give them a good sense of the work environment, amount of flexibility in work duties, deliverable products they will be responsible for, etc. An interview is a two-way process. While you are evaluating the applicant, the applicant is sizing up both the position and you, deciding if they want to work here. No one wins if you pick an applicant who leaves in a couple of months because “the job wasn’t what they thought it was going to be.”
  - Don’ts:
    - Ask applicant about marital status, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, religion, children… or use this kind of information in selecting candidates.
    - Consider anything other than professional qualifications, experiences, expertise, knowledge, and readiness to perform the work in evaluating applicants. Included in the “readiness to perform the work” idea are things like creativity, leadership, and communication skills.
    - Ask applicants what they like to do with their free time, because it opens the door to including things in evaluating the person that shouldn’t be considered.
    - Make inferences about their interests in the position based on extraneous information such as assumptions about their commute, need to relocate, or anything about their personal lives. Questions like “What appeals to you about a career at the USGS?” are a fine way to get them to explain their interests.
    - Consider where applicants live in evaluating their ability to perform the job. We should be clear about where their duty station will be and what
proportion of their time they will need to be in the office (e.g. not teleworking). If they ask questions about the cost of living you should answer them as best you can. We should not use willingness to commute as an evaluation criterion.

- Treat “known” applicants differently than applicants without a prior relationship to you or the USGS.
- Search for candidates on social media.
- Take candidates out to lunch or otherwise put ourselves in informal situations with them, as this creates opportunities for unconscious bias (“Who am I most comfortable with?”) to creep in. If candidates are visiting from out of town, and the interview spans lunch, we should arrange for a host for meals. These hosts should be people who are not involved in the search and who will not be allowed to give feedback to the search committee.

- UCLA faculty hiring guide is recommended as a good resource for best practices: https://equity.ucla.edu/programs-resources/faculty-search-process/faculty-search-committee-resources/

6. Has your hiring and/or admissions process been evaluated by outside consultants? What is the process for changing it?
   - Yes – a hiring audit was performed by OPM (Office of Personal Management) in 2020
     - This was focused on how long it took to get someone on board – less about race and diversity. Recommendations were derived and are being incorporated by HR, e.g. hiring committee standard PDs (position descriptions) for some job series that could prevent pigeonholing candidates.
     - We are not aware of any other outside evaluations and think this could be a good idea
     - One issue this group discussed is that minorities might be in more of a rush to take a job. Sometimes the process can be very slow and opaque (slower than stated on the job advertisement) and the USGS may lose BIPOC applicants because of this.

7. Has your university or company implemented or considered strategies like cohort hiring, mentoring, dual career support and partner hires, re-visioning your work culture, or other considerations outlined in “Leveraging Promising Practices”? 
   - The USGS has a formal mentoring program that is open to all employees. Mentors and proteges are often matched based on job series/type of work.
   - Some science centers within the USGS assign informal (i.e., not part of the USGS formal mentoring program) mentors to new hires, providing recently hired individuals with a resource for information, advice, and guidance without the pressure (and possibly judgement) related to seeking this information from their supervisor.
The Department of Interior (DOI) and USGS offer Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) for peer support.

- These are employee-led groups with members who are drawn together by a common interest and work towards advancing relevancy, diversity, and inclusion throughout the organizations. ERGs have charters with specific goals and objectives the group aims to achieve. ERGs are encouraged to identify a Leadership Liaison (LL). An LL is a DOI manager who provides advice and counsel to guide the ERG’s development, keeps the group focused on organizational goals, supports the group through communication and visibility, and keeps the ERG connected to DOI leadership.
- ERGs may not be offered at all USGS offices, but virtual participation may be possible.

- Hiring strategies used within the USGS include:
  - Cohort hiring (especially for student hires)
  - Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) Mobility Program
    - Provides for assignments to or from state and local governments, institutions of higher education, Indian tribal governments and other eligible organizations that are intended to facilitate cooperation between the Federal Government and the non-Federal entity through the temporary assignment of skilled personnel.
    - IPAs could help or hurt with increasing diversity hiring depending on how they are implemented.
  - USGS Pathways Programs for students and recent graduates
  - Internship Program
    - High school to graduate level students can be hired for full- or part-time employment. This program offers paid opportunities to work in Federal agencies and explore federal careers while completing education.
  - Recent Graduates
    - Developmental Federal experiences intended to promote possible careers in the civil service to individuals who have recently graduated from qualifying educational institutions or programs.
  - Presidential Management Fellows
    - Two-year OPM leadership development program to recruit entry-level candidates with advanced degrees. Applications are accepted annually.
  - Different types of direct hire authorities.
  - There are multiple special hiring authorities that facilitate the hiring of veterans
  - Student services contracts
Advantages include allowing interviewing multiple people and gives an opportunity to work with recent graduates.

Disadvantages include that the student is considered a self-employed contractor. Taxes are not withheld, and insurance is not provided, which could be additional barriers.

• One suggested improvement is to provide guidance regarding the application process to assist individuals who are not familiar with USAjobs.gov and/or the Federal hiring process navigate the system and processes.
• Another suggestion is to encourage implicit bias training for anyone serving on a hiring committee.
  ○ Training on implicit bias and objectivity and discussions of when subjective judgements come into play during the hiring process can make people conscious of the issues and reduce their impact.