

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience (URGE; www.urgeoscience.org) is a community-wide journal-reading and policy-design curriculum to help Geoscientists unlearn racism and improve accessibility, justice, equity, and inclusion (AJEDI) in our discipline. URGE's primary objectives are to (1) deepen the community's knowledge of the effects of racism on the participation and retention of black, brown, and indigenous people in Geoscience¹, (2) use the existing literature, expert opinion, and personal experiences to develop anti-racist policies and strategies^{2,3}, and (3) share, discuss, and modify anti-racist policies and strategies within a dynamic community network and on a national stage. By meeting these objectives, we hope that Geoscience departments and societies will be able to implement a well-researched crowdsourced group of anti-racist policies.

Deliverable - Admissions and Hiring Policies

Education is essential but action is also imperative for achieving the objectives of URGE. Therefore, each topic is paired with concrete deliverables for the individual pods to develop, draft, and share. This deliverable is examining the policies for admissions and hiring at your organization and identifying any new policies to propose or current policies to change.

Hiring and admissions is the entry point to your organization. Policies and procedures at this gate will have major impacts on the people who are part of your university or company, as well as the community who interacts with you. Some of these are legal requirements and some are guidelines that organizations have more control over. Hiring policies include the text of job advertisements, where those advertisements are posted, the requirements for an application, the makeup of your hiring committees and the rubrics/procedures they follow, the interview process, strategic hiring techniques including group or cohort hires, as well as the policies of your organization regarding compensation equity. In addition to the policies for hiring, academic institutions will have admissions policies including the application process (application fees, letters of recommendation, SAT or GRE⁴ testing scores), an evaluation process and rubrics for applications, in-person interviews or campus visit days, as well as unwritten norms such as reaching out to an advisor via email ahead of time. Each one of these policies and procedures is an opportunity to improve the inclusivity and lower or remove barriers to your organization.

This deliverable is an audit of the hiring and, if applicable, the admissions process of your organization. As you investigate postings and advertisements, the application and evaluation processes, equal opportunity/inclusion language, and required fees or test scores, please also include proposed improvements that would increase the diversity of not only your applicant pools but also your new hires/admissions and the retention of these individuals.

Suggested discussion questions:

- What was your experience like going through hiring and/or admissions, start to finish?
- Who is on your hiring and/or admissions committees? Who interfaces with applicants?
- Does your organization make their hiring/admissions policies public? Are they reviewed?

Pods should upload their findings and proposed changes to admissions and hiring policies to the URGE website by 4/2/2021. We also encourage pods to post on their organization's website, and share over social media (#URGEoscience and tag @URGEoscience). Sharing deliverables will propagate ideas, foster discussion, and ensure accountability.

¹R. E. Bernard, E. H. G. Cooperdock, No progress on diversity in 40 years. Nature Publishing Group. 11, 1–5 (2018).

²<https://notimeforsilence.org/>

³<https://www.change.org/p/geoscientists-call-for-a-robust-anti-racism-plan-for-the-geosciences>

⁴S. H. Ledford et al., #GeoGRExit: Why Geosciences Programs Are Dropping the GRE, Eos, 101, 10.1029/2020EO145223 (2020).