

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience



Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for Organization

This is what was found by the Geological Society of America 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.

The GSA staff URGE pod focused on gathering information about hiring policies applicable to GSA Headquarters.

- **What EEO (Equal Employment Opportunity) statement¹ is included in a standard job or admissions advertisement? Are there other inclusion statements and resources publicly available²?**

EEO/AAE/M/F/D/V

Other publicly available statement (from 2016): <https://www.geosociety.org/gsa/hr/AAEEO.aspx>

We're in the process of developing standard language for inclusion statements - in the past this has been incumbent upon hiring managers to make this a priority.

Here's an example taken from the February 2021 Finance Director position advertisement:
"Whatever your intersection of identities, you are welcome at the Geological Society of America. We are committed to inclusivity and promoting an equitable environment that values and respects the uniqueness of all members of our organization."

Statements should also include a statement about our GSA's Commitment to Diversity and link to our Diversity page:

<https://www.geosociety.org/GSA/About/Diversity/GSA/About/Diversity.aspx>

In the longer term we hope to overhaul the [Jobs at GSA page](#) with a narrative storyline highlighting GSA's open culture/presenting ourselves as an open environment, so it is more inviting and motivates a more diverse group of people to want to work for GSA.

• Where are advertisements posted or sent? Are there other strategies for reaching applicants for hiring and/or admissions, e.g. job fairs, showcases?

GSA Headquarters has a relatively small staff (~50) with low turnover. When we post jobs, hiring managers rely on a variety of resources to post and advertise for qualified applicants. Through our research we found that some hiring managers make a concerted effort to post job advertisements with diverse affinity groups and trade organizations (i.e., for a finance position, through the National Association of Black Accountants, National Society of Black CPAs, etc.). Our job advertisements are typically posted via:

- Indeed.com
- Social media
- Dear Colleague letters
- External Job Board advertisements
- Various applicable listservs
- Institute for Broadening Participation Pathways to Science list

GSA's Human Resources Manager has a small recruitment budget that could be potentially useful for helping implement future improvements too. A staff hiring guide could help hiring managers and committees understand how to evaluate the value of diversity for the position being hired, determine what to ask for in the job description to help with finding candidates who can contribute towards the goals of the organization/position, and help identify additional/diverse recruitment channels.

• What are the requirements for an applicant, e.g. letters of recommendations, fees/test scores³/grades? Is providing any of these a potential barrier that could be further lowered or removed? Are there any problematic questions asked?

Applicants need to meet the requirements of the position on their resumes. GSA does require references but not letters of recommendations. We focus interview questions on the position, with each hiring team being responsible for drafting and compiling interview questions that would be asked of the applicant. GSA's current approach does not appear to create any potential barriers. Nor are we aware that problematic questions are being asked.

• How are applicants/applications evaluated? Is that process and/or rubric^{4,5} public? What kind of biases are introduced in this process and what strategies are used to address these, e.g. removing applicant names?

The GSA Human Resources Manager uses a rubric for an initial screening process to ensure applicants meet the minimal requirements of the position. In the event of a question, there is a discussion between team members and then a decision is made if they should be moved on to the next level. If they do not meet these requirements, then their name is removed. They are notified by email of our decision. This process could potentially introduce some affinity bias (homophily) - removing applicant names might be a way to avoid that, but conversely might also lead to overlooking candidates from marginalized groups as well. Although every hire is different, it certainly makes sense to use a standard rubric.

• Who is on selection committees and who makes the final decisions? Who interacts with the applicants?

This depends on the department. GSA's HR Manager typically does initial screenings, and selection committees are assembled on a case-by-case basis. The hiring manager is always on the committee, then someone within the department, and typically several outside. Hiring managers and committee members typically make final decisions.

For future improvements, it might be nice to have a rubric for the composition of a committee. Not all of the same gender, for example. Include a variety of experience levels (from Director to newer hires—serving on selection committees is good professional development and is one way to train staff in hiring practices). Include at least one person from within the same department, and at least one person from a different department (that is often done, but seems like a best practice that can be codified).

• Has your hiring and/or admissions process been evaluated by outside consultants? What is the process for changing it?

Not to our knowledge. The GSA HR Manager uses Society for Human Resource Management guidance. The process for changing it is likely making recommendations to GSA's Executive Director and HR Manager.

• 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"⁶?

Although GSA doesn't do much hiring (one to two full-time positions annually), that makes it especially important to make sure that the infrequent hiring we do is done very well. Without training and standards, people will likely just do their own thing, and DEI will often fall by the wayside.