

URGE

Unlearning Racism in Geoscience

Hiring and/or Admissions Policies for University/Organization

The Geoscience Education Research (GER) Division of the National Association of Geoscience Teachers (NAGT) is a volunteer organization that does not engage in hiring or admission, per se. However, our organization recruits members, officer candidates, and award nominees. The Journal of Geoscience Education, which is affiliated with NAGT and our division, also recruits associate editors to serve on the editorial board. We chose to focus our conversation, and the application of our learning from this week's session, on these topics.

- **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 does not apply to our volunteer organization. Our division should consider creating an inclusive statement to post on the landing page for our website to help create a welcoming environment that will help bring more diversity to our division.

We also discussed adding language to calls for officer and associate editor nominations that would both invite candidates from historically-marginalized backgrounds and help articulate the professional value of serving in those roles. For example:

“The GER division welcomes and invites self-nominations from geoscience education researchers from a wide range of social identities, backgrounds, and professions (K-12 teachers, postdocs, faculty, staff, and informal educators, and beyond) to help shape the future of the division. Current and former officers note that service on the GER board has helped them identify collaborators for research projects, stay up-to-date on new trends in GER, and raised their professional profiles within the GER community.”

As a tangentially-related topic, we realized that some forms of diversity are represented by the current officers, but our bios do not describe them (diversity of position types, border-crossers vs, not, and even first-gen status). We wondered whether we might create a set of recommendations for these bios that would help to broaden perceptions of “what is GER” and “who belongs in our division”.

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

¹ R. Kelley, 10 Samples of an Effective EEO Statement, blog.ongig.com/diversity-and-inclusion/eeo-statement-samples, (2017).

² <https://careers.who.edu/opportunities/diversity-inclusion/>

³ K. Cobb, #GRExit Resources, <https://doi.org/10.6084/m9.figshare.13215461.v1>, (2020).

⁴ J. Posselt, Inside Graduate Admissions: Merit, Diversity, and Faculty Gatekeeping, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvjghw8s>, (2016).

⁵ <https://www.brandeis.edu/diversity/dei-recruitment-hiring/rubric-for-evaluating-diversity-statements.html>

⁶ K. Griffin, J. Bennett, T. York, Leveraging Promising Practices, Washington DC: Aspire Alliance, (2020).



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We announce for officer nominations, awards, etc. within our own newsletter and the NAGT newsletter. We would like to be intentional about making contact with other organizations: SACNAS, AISES, Geolatinas, Geoscience Alliance, etc. Developing connections to leaders within those organizations and sharing GER events may help to bring in new members who (once familiar with the workings of the division) could be candidates for future officer positions.

- **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?**
<https://nagt.org/nagt/divisions/geoed/nominations.html>

To self-nominate for officer positions, we only ask for 2-3 sentences describing why the candidate is interested in serving in that position. Officers are also required to be current members of the division, and the division will pay the \$7 membership fee for officers who are unable to afford it.

During our discussion, we considered inviting candidates to share more about themselves (personal background, current and/or former professional roles, social identity characteristics) during the self-nomination process.

While not an application requirement, a substantial portion of our conversation centered around the high cost of attending EER and how that cost creates a barrier for attendance (especially for K-12 teachers, graduate and undergraduate students, and community college instructors) and for invited speakers (since waivers are not available). This high cost was a pervasive barrier to inclusion that the group felt was essential to address.

- **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?**

Nominees for officer positions are voted on by the GER membership, which undoubtedly allows space for biases to play out. Including the inclusivity statement from the solicitation on the voting ballot may help to mitigate those biases. We also see the need for a rubric for use in evaluating award nomination packages.

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

N/A



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- **Has your hiring and/or admissions process been evaluated by outside consultants? What is the process for changing it?**
Our process is informed by, and aligned with, NAGT's processes.
- **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?**
Creating formal mentoring networks within the GER division membership is something we have considered several times over the past few years- mentoring circles at the Earth Educators Rendezvous, or virtual mentoring circles around particular research topics, seem like promising possibilities. Current GER Division Graduate Student Liaison Zo Kreager has, in the past year, initiated a graduate student peer mentor and support group that has already resulted in positive outcomes like one new officer candidate.

Regarding the Associate Editors for JGE, the group discussed the possibility of mentoring reviewers in ways that would help prepare them for that responsibility.