

# Report from the Equity and Inclusivity Committee

30 Nov 2018

## Membership

Daryl Haggard has joined the EIC. Issues have arisen with contacting members through the new casca-eic email list. The CASCA Secretary has been informed.

## Climate Survey

The initial findings of the Climate Survey were presented in a poster presentation at the CASCA meeting in May. Kristine Spekkens and Brenda Matthews are the committee members who have signed NDAs and are in possession of the climate survey data. Our intention was (and is) to submit a more detailed report through eCass, but that report has not been completed.

## Demographics Surveys

We executed our “interim plan” for a demographics survey by obtaining the CASCA membership list and individually assigning a binary male/female designation to each member. This is not ideal, but it was able to provide some current numbers for any requests from government or NRC related to the SKA memorandum to cabinet. This survey also suffices to provide numbers on the community members at various career stages which was needed for ACURA.

The summary this analysis is as follows:

1. ORD + ASSOC + CAP members: 207 M (79%) ; 55 W (21%)
2. PDF members: 34 M (71%); 14 W (29%)
3. STU members: 95 M (61%) ; 62 W (39%)

We’ve ignored CORP and RET members.

Overall, that’s 336 M (72%) ; 131 W (28%), and we see the usual (alas, expected) trend of the fraction of women diminishing at higher academic levels.

The EIC chair was also involved in the development of the CASCA profile pages that are now live. The private sections of the profile were recommended by the EIC as the only viable way to have non-binary, informed demographics of the community that include all the areas targeted by GDA+, i.e., gender, disability, language and indigenous status. The level of response of the community to the profile questions is not known at this time.

The community facing sides of the profiles also provide a means of selecting members with expertise in certain research areas, which was a recommendation to allow

colloquia committees and others to easily find Canadian researchers for seminar or meeting talks.

### Proposed initiatives (unchanged from previous report)

#### 1 Ethics statement

The AAS has introduced a very extensive ethics statement that now outlines more clearly what is unacceptable behaviour. CASCA could follow their lead and author a more detailed ethics statement as many societies are now doing.

#### 2 White paper for the LRP

The committee discussed summarizing findings of the climate and demographics survey and presenting new initiatives in a white paper to the LRP.

#### 3 National mentoring program

The committee has discussed the merits of mentoring programs in the context of providing individuals with a resource outside their own institutions. This would enable people to have a senior person to whom they could turn with questions about professional development, standards of behaviour and for assistance if they don't know where to turn locally. We noted that some people would not be appropriate to be mentors and there were questions as to how to handle that scenario. We know for instance that CANTAC retains a no-fly list of people not used to evaluate proposals. With regard to the mentoring issue, it became apparent in discussion of the "Astronomy Allies" ([astronomyallies.com](http://astronomyallies.com)) that what we really need is a "go to" list of people as much as a "no fly" list. The allies have a vetting process and only people who pass this vetting can be listed as allies. Once listed, these people are considered individuals to whom issues of harassment and bullying can be brought. It was noted that when such a system was set up for mentoring in Australia, the organizers deliberately made the process look complicated so that people understood that they would not necessarily be assigned. This was a mechanism used to avoid including people who should not have been mentors.

#### 4 Recruitment of people for Astronomy Allies

Regardless of the mentoring program status, it would be useful for Canada for more Canadians to be Astronomy Allies.

#### 5 Pleiades Style Grant system and Athena Swan accreditation

These programs were discussed several times by the EIC. There are polling questions on the climate survey about both of these programs, and a cursory look at the responses shows that > 55% of respondents are in favor of CASCA working to implement these. In both cases, negative responses were < 13% although this leaves quite a few people who are ambivalent or unsure.

### Followup: CASCA presentations on EIC issues

In our previous Board report, the EIC suggested that CASCA create another category of presentations, such as “Community Initiatives and Demographics” that would allow CASCA members to present a second poster presentation in a non-science category. These types of presentations, that provide insight or analysis of the CASCA/ Canadian/astronomical community, could then be a second poster presentation for authors, in addition to science ones. It is better that presentations in this category not be folded under EPO, since they are really community based and cover very different ground than EPO.