

Report for the CASCA Board
Equity and Inclusivity Committee

5 December 2022

1. Summary and Requests:

- a. This report summarizes the activities of the EIC from May 2022 – December 2022.
- b. In accordance with the CASCA Committee Guidelines, a new EIC chair has been selected from continuing members by consensus of that group (item 2).
- c. In partnership with the GSC, the EIC members will design and organize a demographic survey of the CASCA membership (item 3a).
- d. EIC has a representative on the CASCA AGM 2023 SOC (item 3b)
- e. The EIC recommends that the compiled list of resources for scholars and students at risk (Appendix A) features prominently on the CASCA's website (item 3c).
- f. The EIC will shortly decide on the EDI-related training to be provided for the members of CASCA's Awards Committee and the CASCA AGM SOC (item 3d).

2. Composition:

a. *Continuing EIC members:*

Arif Babul (UVic): Feb 2021 – May 2024

Ivana Damjanov (SMU, **Chair**): Feb 2021 – May 2023

Sam Lawler (U. Regina): Sept 2020 – May 2023

Simran Nerval (U. Toronto, **GSC rep**): Sept 2021 – May 2023

Kim Venn (UVic): Sept 2020 – May 2023

b. *New EIC members:*

Ryan Cloutier (McMaster University) May 2022 – May 2025

Yashar Hezaveh, (U. Montreal) May 2022 – May 2025

Fereshteh Rajabi (U. Waterloo) May 2022 – May 2025

Renee Hlozek (U. Toronto, **CASCA Board Rep**) October 2022 – May 2025

- c. The composition of the EIC has changed substantially since the last report (4 out of nine members rotated off). The Committee has a new Chair (Ivana) and a new Board representative (Renee). Simran continues to represent the Graduate Students Committee. Thanks to all EIC members for their service!

3. Activities:

- a. The EIC continues to discuss the design and execution of a post-LRP2020 series of longitudinal demographic surveys of the CASCA membership. Since the last report to the Board it has become clear that the partnership with CAP is not a feasible option because the next iteration of CAP survey may not be realized due to funding issues. In addition, the CAP is not able to share the already collected dataset before the data are anonymized and published in a peer-reviewed journal.

The GSC and EIC will collaborate on this CASCA-only survey that will include a set of questions tailored to graduate students and will also be available to the students who are not (yet) CASCA members.

After consultations with the Postdoc Committee, EIC is currently working on formulating the questions and finding the institution that could host the survey. EIC members have reached out to the previous EIC chair Kristine Spekkens to explore the option of distributing the survey using Qualtrics online tool available at Queen's University. The current timeline for delivering the survey is within the calendar year of 2023.

- b. The CASCA AGM 2023 SOC Chair Tim Robishaw joined the October EIC meeting to start the discussion on the EDI aspect of the upcoming annual meeting of CASCA. Ryan Cloutier volunteered and was accepted as the EIC representative on the SOC.
- c. Following up on the action that Arif initiated earlier this year, the EIC has compiled a list of resources for scholars and students at risk. The list is appended here (Appendix A) and will be available on the EIC's webpage. **The EIC kindly requests that the link to this list features prominently on the CASCA website (e.g., a thumbnail/link on the homepage).**
- d. The EIC received a request for EDI-related training from the CASCA's Awards Committee and the CASCA AGM SOC. As this training should be available annually, the EIC is considering several long-term options, from in-person training sessions to online courses (Appendix B). The request will be answered in time for

the Awards Committee sessions early in 2023 and for the AGM SOC's final deliberations on the list of invited speakers for CASCA 2023.

Appendix A

Resources for Scholars and Students at Risk

- 1) The Student Refugee Program (SRP), managed by World University Service of Canada - accepts applications from eligible applicants in the following countries of asylum: **Jordan, Kenya, Lebanon, Malawi, Tanzania, Uganda, and Pakistan.**

<https://srp.wusc.ca/students/>

- 2) Afgan At-Risk Scholar and Activists (International Development Research Centre)

<https://www.idrc.ca/en/project/placement-preservation-and-perseverance-afghan-risk-scholars-activists-and-students>

- 3) The Scholars at Risk (SAR) mission to protect scholars and promote academic freedom

<https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/sections/sar-canada/> and
<https://www.scholarsatrisk.org/get-help/>

- 4) Pathways and supports available to graduate students impacted by the protests in Iran - University of Toronto:

<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/pathways-iran/>

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- 5) CITA: Following earlier precedent, CITA has an active visitor program that can support astrophysicists seeking refuge from perilous conditions in their current country. Our visitor program can support long duration and short duration visits to **any** CITA Inc. member institution. ***If you know of scholars that might benefit from this program, please send their***

contact information to director@cita.utoronto.ca and we will collaborate with you on supporting and facilitating their visit.

6) UWaterloo Students-at-risk fund

<https://imodules.uwaterloo.ca/s/1802/21/form.aspx?sid=1802&gid=2&pgid=2660&cid=7415&appealcode=23FSGEOLG#:~:text=The%20University%20of%20Waterloo%20is,an%20initial%20contribution%20of%20%24200%2C000>

7) Perimeter Institute: “The Institute offers positions to researchers and students of any nationality who are at risk in their home countries or their intended place of work/study”

<https://perimeterinstitute.ca/positions-students-and-scientists-displaced-or-risk-due-conflict>

8) McMaster: “...opportunity to sponsor and support scholars in countries and regions at war or where they personally face persecution”

<https://global.mcmaster.ca/forciblydisplaced/>

Appendix B

Possible online EDI training certificates for Awards committee members and SOC members

- 1) <https://www.nait.ca/nait/continuing-education/courses/citc916-leadership-communication-diversity> Runs from January 16-27, Remove On-demand delivery \$180 per person
- 2) Range of EDI courses/modules online: <https://candiversity.com/courses/> (roughly \$30-50 per module)
- 3) Unconscious bias online resource: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVp9Z5k0dEE>

- 4) Online 'tool kit' for selection with EDI lens
https://web.archive.org/web/20181015151136/http://www.hrcouncil.ca/hr-toolkit/right-people-selection.cfm#_secA1
- 5) Reference on gendered bias in reading reference letters
https://web.archive.org/web/20181015151115/https://www.eswnonline.org/wp-content/uploads/gravity_forms/23-b28d66b6400f67d9648a049f8faf44e0/2015/05/Gender-Bias-in-Letters-Brown-ADVANCE-Cyr-and-Silver.pdf
- 6) Harvard Implicit Bias test <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html>
- 7) An article on best practices regarding implicit bias and selection:
<https://www.univcan.ca/implicit-bias-and-selection-the-facts-and-best-practices/>