

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan

Introduction

Securing Antarctica's Environmental Future (SAEF), an ARC Special Research Initiative (SRI) in Excellence in Antarctic Science, is developing the future Antarctic research workforce. Over seven years, SAEF will directly fund the training and development of around 150 postdoctoral fellows, postgraduate researchers, Honours students, research assistants, and professional support staff.

SAEF has a fundamental commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion and expects participants to uphold these values when representing SAEF. SAEF promotes a safe and inclusive environment for its diverse community. It celebrates and recognises that its community's diversity of identities bring crucial experience, knowledge, and perspectives. Our success and impact will be driven by the diversity of backgrounds and perspectives of our team.

This plan outlines how SAEF will promote equity, diversity, and inclusion and create a community where everyone has a sense of belonging. From recruitment practices through the development of our researchers and support staff to the broader management of the program, we are committed to providing equal opportunities to all participants and equitable access to groups who are currently underrepresented in the STEM disciplines.

The SAEF Program Executive Group will review the plan annually.

Scope

This plan applies to all SAEF activities and all SAEF participants. SAEF is a collaboration between many universities and partner organisations, both within Australia and overseas, and this plan is intended to complement the equity, diversity, and inclusion policies and plans of all these organisations. Where there is any inconsistency, the home organisation policy will override this plan. Grievances will be managed under the policy of the institution that applies to the respondent.

Goals

Our overarching goals are to:

- create an inclusive environment and culture
- provide and promote a fair and inclusive working environment, free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and sexual harassment.
- ensure all SAEF participants feel valued, respected, and supported
- recognise the significance of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples perspectives and knowledge
- identify and remove structural barriers preventing underrepresented groups such as First Nations peoples, women, people with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse cohorts, and members of LGBTQIA+ communities from advancing their careers, and recognise that there are intersections between different identities, and

- provide assistance to SAEF participants to access appropriate grievance resolution processes.

Governance & Committees

- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion will be a standing agenda item on the Program Executive Group meetings, with regular reporting.
- The Program Executive Group will oversee the implementation and regular review and revision of this plan and its implementation.
- The program team will facilitate an annual feedback process to gauge the satisfaction of SAEF participants with this plan.
- The Administering Organisation will report on equity, diversity, and inclusion, including on gender balance in the Annual Report to ARC.
- SAEF will consider gender and other measures of diversity, when selecting members for all committees.
- Recognising the importance of EDI to the SAEF community, a dedicated EDI champion will be appointed within SAEF, with responsibilities including:
 - identify and assess EDI structural barriers and make recommendations for removing or mitigating these barriers;
 - lead EDI initiatives within SAEF;
 - develop EDI resources for SAEF;
 - represent SAEF's EDI efforts in national and international forums.

Recruitment

While we understand that recruitment of SAEF members is subject to the policies of the recruiting organisation, SAEF promotes the following equity, diversity and inclusion principles within recruitment processes:

- Job advertisements, position descriptions, and selection criteria will use gender-neutral and inclusive language.
- Selection panels should strive for diverse representation, including but not limited to gender, career stage and identity.
- All members of selection panels are encouraged to undertake training on equal employment opportunity or similar and to be alert to unconscious biases in decision-making.
- Selection panels will make good faith efforts to include appointable members of underrepresented groups on longlists and shortlists and consider performance or achievement relative to opportunity.
- SAEF may seek to advertise positions or scholarships targeting underrepresented groups.
- SAEF will work with home organisation equity, diversity and inclusion teams and consult other organisations in the polar science community on possible strategies for recruiting HDR

students and staff from underrepresented groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and First Nations peoples and strengthening pipelines to these roles (e.g. Honours students, research internships).

Working Conditions & Environment

- SAEF will foster a workplace culture that is safe, inclusive and collaborative where students and staff can feel recognised and valued for their distinct backgrounds, talents, and perspectives.
- SAEF encourages all participants to be aware of their own privilege.
- SAEF is committed to addressing pay equity and will strive to raise awareness about these issues.
- SAEF encourages open general discussion about mental health at work and sharing of information about local Employee Assistance Programs and other mental health services and resources.
- SAEF supports and promotes flexible working arrangements to accommodate individual circumstances to ensure a healthy work culture and work-life harmony. Participants are encouraged to propose flexible working hours, work-from-home plans, or other suitable arrangements that align with home organization policies and operational requirements.
- SAEF will consider Achievement Relative to Opportunity when offering programs and funding to SAEF members.
- SAEF supports the full participation of individuals with disabilities, injuries, or health conditions in the program, while also respecting their right to privacy and confidentiality.
- SAEF recognizes that field teams in Antarctica are required to meet medical fitness levels determined by the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD). However, SAEF is committed to exploring alternative means of participation, such as leveraging visualisation and other technologies for remote exploration of Antarctica.
- SAEF will invite opportunities for feedback, including an annual feedback process for all participants to monitor the overall culture of SAEF, with a focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Training & Development

SAEF's training and development program is outlined in the SAEF Leadership, Mentoring and Career Development Plan, which considers SAEF EDI principles and commitments.

Meetings & Events

- SAEF aims to schedule meetings at times that suit all participants. All core SAEF meetings (such as regular committee and group meetings) will be held between 9.30am and 2.30pm, with specific consideration given to the needs of Western Australian and international participants. Options for recording meetings will be explored on a needs basis.
- SAEF will consider school holidays and religious calendars when scheduling events.



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- SAEF conferences, workshops, seminars, and other events will be committed to diverse and gender-balanced panels and speakers.
- SAEF meetings online and in person will begin with an appropriate Acknowledgement of Country and significant SAEF meetings will commence with a Welcome to Country delivered by a local community, where possible.
- Meeting and event chairs and facilitators have a responsibility for ensuring that all attendees have an opportunity to contribute and be heard.
- Where practical, SAEF will record its major events and make recordings available online to make them more accessible.
- Organising staff/committees will prioritise equity and diversity considerations when selecting the venue and timing of social activities. Where practical, SAEF will utilise available technology to make live-streamed and recorded events accessible to those who are deaf or hard of hearing, and those who are blind or have low vision.
- SAEF participants with caring responsibilities will be supported to apply for funding to support at-home or on-site care during conferences, workshops, or meetings in Australia.
- Children can attend meetings if childcare is unavailable, subject to home organisational policy.
- SAEF will not organise social events where the primary focus is the consumption of alcohol or where there is unlimited access to free alcohol. Where alcohol is available at social events, suitable non-alcoholic options will also be provided.
- SAEF participants are encouraged to consider the EDI policies of external events and to communicate any concerns (eg. gender balance) to the event organisers before accepting invitations to speak.

Communications

- SAEF will profile a diverse range of researchers across all our communication channels (website, newsletter, annual reports, social media, etc). In particular, efforts will be made to highlight groups that have traditionally been underrepresented among Antarctic scientists and explorers, based on available data.
- SAEF will not disclose personal information without consent in introductions, reference letters, media coverage and other communications. SAEF will also respect the cultural perspectives and preferences of people who would like to share some personal information, including First Nations peoples.
- SAEF recognises that language is critical to inclusion and participants will use the language that is culturally appropriate and respectful of the diversity of SAEF participants and avoids the use of words or expressions that might be considered to exclude particular groups of people.



Document Governance

Supporting SAEF documents	SAEF Leadership, Mentoring and Career Development Plan
	SAEF Ombudspeople Information
	SAEF Grievance Handling Procedure
Related documents	Member Organisations Policies and Procedures
	ARC Policies and Strategies
	Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research
	Australian Antarctic Division – Research Guidelines
Approval	Program Executive Group Date: 06/06/2023 Meeting: 97
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Version	2
Responsibility	Program Manager
Reference materials	