



APS Engineering Support (AES) Division Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) Plan

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Change Log

Date	Changes Requested By	Editor	Type	Change Description
2/26/2019	N/A	J. Connolly J. Maclean M. O'Neill G. Pile A. Thurman	Admin	Original issue Once issued, this document will be archived in DMS/ICMS and placed on a 6-month revision cycle to force a review and update by the review team and signatories.

1.0 Background and Introduction

Background

Argonne National Laboratory's Annual DOE Laboratory Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Plan for Fiscal Year 2018 (Reference 1), includes a very good summary of the Laboratory's rationale for a focus on D&I initiatives. It is included below for information, rather than paraphrasing in this document:

Argonne National Laboratory (Argonne) serves America as a science and energy laboratory distinguished by the breadth of its research and development (R&D) capabilities, combined with a unique portfolio of experimental and computational user facilities. In basic science, Argonne delivers new knowledge in physical sciences, earth sciences, and mathematics. The Laboratory's early-stage R&D encompasses nuclear, chemical, bioprocess, materials, and systems engineering, and drives breakthroughs in energy technology. Argonne is a locus of research for more than 8,300 scientists and engineers each year from other institutions, whose work is advanced by access to the Laboratory's research centers and user facilities and by collaborations with Argonne scientists. Since its founding in 1946, Argonne has been managed by The University of Chicago (UChicago), one of the world's preeminent research universities, and its work is enriched by ongoing collaborations with UChicago faculty. The Laboratory employs more than 3,100 Chicago-area residents.

As Argonne strives for continued scientific excellence, the Laboratory also must evolve to maintain its competitive advantage by attracting, hiring, advancing, and retaining the best available talent. This diversity and inclusion (D&I) plan builds upon the framework created in 2016 that prioritizes the development of an inclusive workplace that values and respects the contributions of all employees. The following mission, vision, and guiding principles were developed to integrate diversity & inclusion into Argonne's mission and to provide a foundation for creating strategies and actions at both laboratory and directorate levels.

Mission

Achieve scientific excellence, innovation, and strategic positioning for the Laboratory by leveraging diverse perspectives, ideas, and experiences

Vision

Have a diverse, inclusive, respectful, and transparent work environment

Guiding Principles

- Cultivate best practices for recruiting diverse talent at all levels
- Create an intentional path to leadership and career advancement for all employees
- Build a culture of trust and respect, with inclusion as a core value

The guiding principles are broad to allow Laboratory leaders to further identify the mechanisms through which the principles will be implemented and to operationalize the plan.

Introduction

Reference 1 further outlined the action the Laboratory took in conducting Climate Surveys across all directorates and divisions. In September 2015, Argonne conducted a customized D&I climate survey to gain a better understanding of the Laboratory's workforce culture, support the development of a D&I strategy, and provide a baseline against which to measure progress. This was followed up with a pulse survey called The Next Step Climate Survey Follow Up (2017 Survey), conducted in September 2017. A

number of specific questions were similar to the 2015 Climate Survey, but the 2017 survey included new additions, including a few questions without a direct or similar theme in the 2015 survey.

Further noted in Reference 1, the objectives of the 2017 Survey were to update the 2015 findings, measure progress in comparison with the 2015 baseline survey, and to identify and inform directorates / divisions about continuing opportunities for improvement.

The overall response rate of the 2017 Survey was 62%; each programmatic and service directorate achieved a response rate greater than 50%. The 2017 Survey findings across the Laboratory showed incremental improvements in employees' perception of the Laboratory's commitment to D&I, division directors' leadership in D&I, inclusion and respect, and professional development and advancement. The measured improvements in these four D&I climate indicators although modest, are statistically significant, and suggest an incremental movement toward an improved D&I culture. The other key indicators that were measured—supervision and teamwork/collaboration—revealed no statistically significant improvements, and the data results also indicated that exclusionary behaviors continue to exist in areas of the Laboratory.

Argonne has reaffirmed its commitment to continue executing on the following four goals and strategies to enhance the inclusiveness of our work environment, further advance efforts to increase workforce diversity, and address challenges and opportunities identified in the 2017 Survey.

Goal 1: Establish and support D&I as a core value

Strategy - Engage: Communicate the importance of D&I to mission success by providing visibility and leadership support to D&I goals through planning, messaging, and behaviors reflective of inclusive leadership.

Goal 2: Build an inclusive, collaborative, and transparent work environment

Strategy - Enlist: Empower employees by creating a workplace where diverse ideas and views are respected, valued, and encouraged through employee resource groups, professional development opportunities, consistent and transparent performance management, and enhanced training to develop leader and supervisor skills.

Goal 3: Develop a sustainable training program that provides all employees with the skills needed to successfully model behaviors that exemplify an inclusive environment

Strategy - Educate: Provide all staff with resources and training to promote inclusive behaviors, understand and reduce implicit bias, and address exclusionary behavior.

Goal 4: Establish shared accountability and responsibility among all employees for promoting diversity and fostering inclusion

Strategy - Empower: Implement goals and measures that incorporate D&I into organizational objectives and processes, and provide procedures and support for diverse recruitment, retention, and engagement processes.

With the data revealed at the Laboratory level, directorate and then division-specific data were presented to appropriate representatives. The 2017 Survey data were presented first at the directorate level for Photon Sciences on April 25, 2018 and then for the AES division on November 5, 2018. The following is

an attempt to summarize the AES division data concisely due to the multitude of results provided by WFD Consulting.

Overall 88 out of 161 AES/APS-U staff responded for a response rate of 55%, compared with nearly the same response rate for PSC of 284 out of 528 staff (54%). A total of 66 staff (out of 88 respondents), however, indicated that their division was AES, therefore, the responses from only those respondents comprise the results in this summary.

First, it was noted that AES feedback on the 2017 Survey overall was very good. Significant improvements were found for AES when comparing the 2017 results to the 2015 results.

A summary of the mean scores (on a 1-5 scale, with 5 being the highest / most favorable rating possible) by category are displayed below in Table 1.

While the mean score increased in all categories from 2015 to 2017 for AES, note that 4 out of 7 of the mean scores are noted as statistically significant (circled in Table 1). These 4 categories of note were Professional Development, Lab Commitment to D&I, Division Director D&I Leadership and Inclusion and Respect.

Climate Indicator	Lab (non-PSC) Mean 2017	PSC Mean 2017	AES Mean 2017	AES Mean 2015
Employee Engagement	4.07	4.18	4.31	4.25
Professional Development & Advancement	3.30	3.45	3.52	3.12
Lab Commitment to D&I	3.67	3.77	3.84	3.59
Division Director D&I Leadership	3.85	3.99	4.06	3.71
Inclusion and Respect	3.87	3.90	3.97	3.71
Supervision	3.83	3.86	3.89	3.92
Teamwork and Collaboration	3.79	3.77	3.86	3.81

Table 1: AES mean scores from the 2017 Survey compared to the remaining Laboratory means, PSC mean scores and the 2015 Climate Survey AES division scores

Also noted was Division Director feedback being very positive in the areas of treating staff from diverse backgrounds with respect, dignity and fairness (83%) and creating a work environment where it is safe to constructively confront inappropriate words and actions (85%).

Also from the survey, there were four areas of improvement identified for the division:

Teamwork: Division director and supervisors modeling teamwork

Communication: Division director and supervisors considering the point of view of others

Inclusion and Respect: Fear of speaking up

Professional Development: Opportunities for advancement, knowing what to do to advance, career opportunities available, and other topics. While improved, this remains the lowest climate indicator for the division

After review by the AES Division Director (DD) and Associate Division Directors (ADDs), it was determined that the results should next be shared with the 2 AES D&I representatives to best determine next steps to be taken.

1.1 Determining Divisional Actions to Address 2017 Survey Results

The focus of a December 5, 2018 meeting with the AES DD, ADDs and D&I representatives reviewed the data compiled by WFD Consulting for the division. In order to focus attention on improvement, the 4 recommended categories for enhancement (Teamwork/Communication, Fear of Retaliation and Professional Development) were targeted as areas against which actions should be concretely identified.

The immediate goal of this meeting was to gather specific recommendations from the D&I representatives on actions to be taken. However, during the course of discussion, it was suggested that a larger pool of review and suggestion gathering from a cross section of the division would be beneficial, to best determine the next course of action to address any deficiencies in the categories identified above.

The plan for holding these small focus groups was that the ADD and D&I representative would select, at random, approximately 3-5 employees from the group for a question and answer / discussion forum session. The Group Leader would not be present, but would be aware a discussion forum was being held. A predetermined, agreed upon set of questions would be used in both the Mechanical & Interlock Systems (MIS) group sessions as well as the Computer Systems (CS) group sessions to eliminate tailoring of the question set or asking separate questions of groups. Discussion would be encouraged, so as not to limit the answers to terse responses to questions asked.

The 5 standard questions asked were as follows:

- Q1. Beyond current opportunities for employee learning and growth, what would you recommend AES consider or adopt?
- Q2. Is it clear what it would take for you to advance your career at the APS / Argonne? If not, why not and what would you recommend to make it more clear?
- Q3. How can the division director, ADDs, GLs, Supervisors model teamwork better in their behaviors?
- Q4. What ideas can you share so that diversity of opinion and perspective is first offered, then valued / respected?
- Q5. In your opinion and considering the current AES working environment, what would be the reason why an individual would not speak up about issues that concern them, for fear it would affect their performance review or career?

All of the focus groups were scheduled to be completed by January 30, 2019 and summaries of the results generated for both the CS and MIS groups interviewed. This was achieved as tracked in the APS Action Item Tracking System available online [here](#).

Once raw feedback was recorded, the next step was to attempt to summarize actions by category (Teamwork/Communication, Fear of Retaliation and Professional Development).

Both the raw feedback and recommendations from a multitude of notes across interviews of 7 groups were reviewed by the DD, ADDs and D&I representatives in AES and the following actions are suggested to be taken:

Teamwork/Communication: Division director and supervisors modeling teamwork / considering point of view of others

Action: Distribute division staff meeting ‘placemat’ to Group Leaders for use in their own staff meetings and to share recognition directly with those being recognized.

Responsible Lead / Due Date: J. Connolly / Completed on March 7, 2019

Action: Formalize a non-awards recognition section as part of the standard AES all-hands meeting agenda, beyond traditional recognition mechanisms of Pacesetters, SPOT Awards, UChicago awards, patent awards, and others.

Responsible Lead / Due Date: J. Connolly / May 31, 2019

Action: Continue holding group roundtable meetings in current format; include TSS members as well in rotation. Repeat cycle after August conclusion of all groups, not waiting for new calendar year.

Responsible Lead / Due Date: J. Connolly / Completed (all groups scheduled) as of March 7, 2019; schedule reminder for restarting roundtables after all groups have completed is set to annual reminder on last business day of July.

Inclusion and Respect: Fear of speaking up

Action: Publicize, either at AES all-hands meeting, at AES staff meeting ‘placemat’ or other venue, all the avenues that exist for raising concerns (e.g. Argonne Ombuds, Argonne hotline at 1-877-587-2449), outside of conventional management hierarchy.

Responsible Lead / Due Date: J. Connolly / May 31, 2019

Action: Identify options for email or other generic form submittal (e.g., atrium or common area PC station, website comment form, suggestion box, ticket system) that could maintain anonymity to a reasonable extent. Existing options of the Argonne Ombuds office and anonymous reporting hotline of 1-877-587-2449 remain available.

If this cannot be anonymous to reasonable extent, a physical suggestion box will be implemented with paper form submittals, transcribed to action items addressed via the [APS Action Item System](#).

Responsible Lead / Due Date: K. Sidorowicz / June 30, 2019

Action: Promote completion of Inclusive Leadership training for supervisors, managers. Track completion for those identified to complete course.

Responsible Lead / Due Date: J. Connolly / May 31, 2019

Professional Development:

Action: Direct reporting manager to hold either 1:1 discussions with employees or cover the following in a group meeting / session:

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- (a) Review the Human Resources Career Framework Level Guide Charts for the applicable job classification, available [here](#) and for those in the RD series.
 - (b) Identify SMEs/Mentors and HR Resources that employees can consult with for guidance so they have a better understanding the career framework.
For example, a consultation with the chair of the Committee on Hiring and Promotions (CHP) could be made available to identify what gaps exist and how to address them, based on previous CHP reviews, to be better positioned for an RD promotion.
 - (c) Discuss training needs and type with regards to employee development. Employee should be reminded they have the responsibility to inform manager of training that would further professional development. Argonne policy still applies for determination if training is relevant.

Responsible Lead / Due Date: AES Group Leaders / August 31, 2019

Action: Review and prepare proposal to add additional recognition program similar to the [EGS Excellence Award](#) that identifies outstanding contributions by project performance, process improvement or directorate teams, beyond the constraints of a Laboratory Pacesetter Award.

Responsible Lead / Due Date: G. Pile / July 31, 2019

In order that follow-up is provided, the above actions will be entered into the [APS Action Item Tracking System](#) upon approval and archival of this AES D&I Plan

1.2 Keeping Focus on D&I Initiatives

One of the larger takeaways from the feedback received, independent of group, was the strong desire that follow-up and follow through is occurring, and they are made aware of it. This is the intent behind not only publishing this D&I plan on the AES division website, but loading the action items outlined in the aforementioned [APS Action Item System](#). This system is available to anyone with an Argonne credential and has been used by multiple groups / divisions within PSC to date.

Of note here as well is the next Climate Survey, per Reference 1, is scheduled to be conducted in 2020, at which time a similar review of the data obtained will be conducted and actions adjusted appropriately.

In the interim, AES will continue to subscribe to any recommendations coming out of the PSC D&I Working Group or broader Argonne D&I initiatives, to supplement this plan. Additionally, this AES D&I plan will be set to a 6-month review schedule, in order that it is reviewed and revised accordingly based on any further information that becomes available or topic that should be included as part of the overall D&I plan.

1.3 References

1. Argonne National Laboratory “Annual DOE Laboratory Diversity and Inclusion Plan: Fiscal Year 2018”, April 2018.
2. WFD Consulting, 2015 Climate Survey and 2017 Next Step Climate Survey Follow-Up Results, Photon Sciences directorate and APS Engineering Support division summaries (2018)