

ICRAR UWA Guide for Inclusive Conferences/Workshops

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[1] These guidelines were created from the *ASTRO 3D Guide for Inclusive Meetings* (Ingrid McCarthy - ASTRO3D COO) and *CAS guidelines for promoting equity and diversity at conferences and meetings* (da Cunha, E., Petroff, E., Fisher, D.).

Overview

This guide aims to provide recommendations for how to best represent and reflect the diverse community of attendees in ICRAR or ICRAR supported conferences, meetings and activities. In this guide, “meetings” refers to conferences, retreats, busy weeks or any type of meeting that brings people together.

The goals of this guide are:

- To promote the status of underrepresented groups at ICRAR or ICRAR supported meetings including women, transgender and gender-diverse people, sexual minorities, ethnic and racial minorities, people dealing with disabilities, and those from underrepresented nationalities. Invitation to, and participation in conferences are a means by which members of these groups can increase in both esteem and career standing.
- To enhance the visibility of minorities in order to foster a diverse range of role models for younger academics.
- To promote the importance placed on a diverse range of voices, ideas and experiences; research now shows clearly that socially diverse groups are more innovative than homogeneous groups.
- To diversify the range of experts usually presenting at conferences (specially invited speakers), which has the potential to enhance the science, highlight innovative ideas and facilitate new collaborations.
- To promote a safe environment at ICRAR/ICRAR supported meetings, in which attendees feel free to express themselves independently of personal status.

Before a Meeting

Committees

1. Ensure a diverse and representative organising committee (consider age, career level, gender, transgender and gender-diverse people, sexual minorities, ethnic and racial minorities, people dealing with disabilities, and those from underrepresented nationalities).
2. The committee should set goals for equity and inclusion, e.g., representation of different identities, career stages or communities.

3. Include a highly visible statement in the conference web page describing commitment to equity and diversity. Include policies on anti-harassment, conference speaker and chair, and a general code of conduct.
4. Ensure a diverse list of invited speakers, session chairs and contributed speakers
 - a. Aim for a 50-50 gender split, EMCR representation and, for national/international meetings, good geographic/institutional diversity in the SOC.
 - b. The LOC should provide the SOC with the above criteria when considering who invite to speak or attend. The criteria should be transparent and available to all applicants at the point of application. Ensure the criteria are well-rounded and clear. Avoid having the SOC as self-inviting.
 - c. Make a proactive commitment to finding as diverse a group of potential speakers as possible. Invite people outside your own network, and ask for suggestions.
 - d. Recognise that effort is required to create an equitable agenda e.g., women are more likely to decline invitations due to increased demands on their time, family responsibilities etc.

Location, Scheduling & Funding

5. Some nations have laws and customs dangerous to particular groups (e.g., women, transgender and gender-diverse people, sexual minorities etc). This should be carefully considered when choosing a conference destination.
6. Schedule mindfully:
 - a. Avoid scheduling on cultural or religious holidays, weekends or outside standard work hours
 - b. Design agendas with regular breaks
 - c. Consider making virtual attendance possible and record talks
7. Ensure that funding is allocated (or sought) to support inclusivity:
 - a. Childcare costs - make it clear as early as possible whether this will be arranged or the applicant will make arrangements and be reimbursed
 - b. Support those without travel funds (e.g., students, ECRs)
8. Work towards alleviating the bias against people with primary carer responsibilities
 - a. Explore child care options (e.g., an on-site carer)
 - b. Ensure the venue includes a private 'family room' for new mothers
 - c. Be mindful of the schedule for people with children or other family caring responsibilities (e.g., weekends, school holidays etc)
 - d. If possible, offer travel and/or accommodation support for partners
9. Ensure the venue is suitable for people with disabilities
 - a. Does it have access to ramps to the stage
 - b. Is the space physically accessible
10. Be mindful when choosing the venue. Avoid remote locations. Minimise the commute time to the conference venue in order to appeal to attendees with personal/family commitments.
11. Follow up with invited speakers if the invitation is declined.

Promotion

12. When promoting the event:

- a. Use inclusive images and language e.g., “representatives from diverse backgrounds and expertise are encouraged to apply and attend”.
- b. State if funding is available on a per-needs basis, and if special inclusion services are provided (e.g., childcare, interpreters, accessibility of venue etc).

Registration

13. During the registration process:
 - a. Ask participants whether special assistance is needed (sign interpreters, attendant carers, hearing loop, dietary requirements).
 - b. All participants should be requested to indicate their pronouns at registration, via the use of pronoun stickers. Pronoun stickers have been provided by Kirsten Gottschalk, and are available for [download](#) from the ICRAR website.
14. Guidelines for event signage, talks and posters
 - a. Ensure presentations are prepared with a minimum font size with high-contrast backgrounds.
 - b. Prepare event signage using large print and contrasting colours (e.g., directions to meeting rooms and restrooms, name tags, emergency exits etc) Use a microphone to assist people with hearing impairment.

During a Meeting

Talks and Inclusivity

1. Include the following in the introductory talk:
 - a. A Welcome/acknowledgement of country
 - b. A statement on inclusivity
 - c. Draw attention to the Code of Conduct
 - d. Note time constraints and remind presenters to use microphones
2. Moderate Q&A sessions with an awareness of inclusion: consider offering questions to students and ECRs preferentially
 - a. Have someone on the LOC track the demographics of people asking questions
3. Prepare a survey for the end of the conference to understand participants views on the goals you set as an organising committee at the start of this process.
4. Find volunteers to help persons with disabilities who require assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation
5. If required, ensure the presence of interpreters during talks, but also networking and social events.

Social Events

6. Ensure social events do not exclude or offend participants. Ensure locations are physically accessible.

After a Meeting

Assessment

1. Ensure the LOC and SOC assess the success of the conference from the point of view of the organisers and the participants
 - a. Which goals were met?
 - b. What worked well from the organisers perspective?
 - c. What did we find out from the post-event survey?
 - d. Can we share this information with future organising teams?
2. Provide a report to the ICRAR exec. As a minimum requirement, the organisers should fill the check-list at this link and submit it to the exec. However, longer reports are requested by other funding bodies (e.g., ASTRO 3D), the organisers are invited to submit the same report to ICRAR as well as long as it addresses all the items included in the check-list.
3. Any unspent funding will go back to ICRAR. The meeting organisers should not assume that unspent funds are available at their discretion, unless this has been officially requested and approved by the ICRAR executive.