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Equal Opportunity - Equity and Workplace Diversity Procedure

CSIRO is an equal opportunity employer. Staff are appointed or promoted on their individual merits and capacity to perform. Each Business Unit will appoint/designate staff to carry out the role of Equity and Diversity Officers.

About

Intent

To ensure that all staff are treated fairly and equitably and are encouraged to perform to the best of their ability as employees of CSIRO and to establish sources of specialist advice and support for staff, with a view to more effective management and ultimate elimination of unfair treatment

Application

This procedure applies throughout CSIRO.

General Requirement

CSIRO is committed to developing and maintaining a culture that respects, values and actively pursues the benefits of a diverse workforce and in which discriminatory policies and practices are not tolerated.

Business Units appoint Equity and Diversity Officers to provide information and assistance to staff who believe that they may have been subjected to unfair treatment in the workplace. Business Units determine the number and location of Equity and Diversity Officers. There is no mandated ratio of Equity and Diversity Officers to staff. The overriding concern is to ensure that every member of staff can access an Equity and Diversity Officer.

Supporting Information

Workplace Diversity Plan

CSIRO is committed to developing and maintaining a culture that respects, values and actively pursues the benefits of a diverse workforce and in which discriminatory policies and practices are not tolerated.

Detailed objectives, strategies and performance indicators to achieve this end are contained in CSIRO's Workplace Diversity Plan (see [References](#)).

CSIRO reports annually on its performance against the Plan, as required under the *Equal Employment Opportunities (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987*.

Equity and Diversity Officers

Role of E&D Officers

E&D Officers provide information and support to staff and supervisors on diversity related matters. They may also assist with raising awareness of equity / diversity issues in their Business Unit. It is not the role of the E&D Officer to resolve or investigate complaints, nor to be an advocate for any party. They will normally not be a member of an investigating team, other than to provide specialist advice if required.

When a matter has potentially serious implications (eg sexual harassment or discrimination), the E&D Officer will advise the In Business HR Manager or Business Unit Leader of the situation and the issues involved. If requested by the complainant, the E&D Officer will agree to withhold names, unless CSIRO's duty of care demands an immediate management response or where a criminal offence may be involved.

If the In Business HR Manager or Business Unit Leader is implicated in a complaint, the E&D Officer will canvass options with HR Workplace Relations and Policy.

E&D Officers will keep the complainant and respondent advised of the steps planned to resolve the complaint. A discussion guide to assist E&D officers can be found at References.

E&D Officers will be sensitive to the needs of complainants and, if necessary, may seek the assistance of, or refer matters to Human Resources staff within the Business Unit.

CSIRO recognises this valued role by providing:

- reasonable time during normal working hours to undertake the role;
- formal recognition of time spent on this role in their Annual Performance Agreement;
- time and encouragement to participate in essential training to enhance their effectiveness; and
- the opportunity, as a member of the Business Unit Equity and Diversity Committee to participate in the assessment of Diversity Awards.

Selection of Equity and Diversity Officers

Normally, expressions of interest in Equity and Diversity Officer (E&D) roles are invited by the Business Unit Leader. A selection panel assesses the applicants and prepares a recommendation for approval by the Business Unit Leader.

The selection panel should include a representative of staff. The panel will determine whether or not there is a need for formal interviews.

Recommended duty statement and selection criteria can be found under "References".

Duration of appointment

E&D Officers are appointed for a minimum of one year (a term of 2-3 years is more common), but may relinquish the role at any time.

An E&D Officer who has completed their appointment may be reappointed. In considering reappointment, selection panels and Business Unit Leaders will take into account the advantages for their work location of continuity (e.g. confidence of staff, knowledge of the subject, skill in interacting with staff) versus the enthusiasm brought by a new

candidate, the benefit of increasing the number of staff with knowledge and expertise in handling Equity and Diversity matters and the needs of different groups represented in the workplace.

Access to E&D Officers

All staff must be made aware of who their E&D Officers are and be able to approach them readily. As a guide, where a Business Unit has multiple sites, each site of 15 or more staff should have a designated E&D Officer, except if the sites are within easy commuting distance of an E&D Officer.

Bounds to E&D Officer responsibility

E&D Officers will normally provide information and assistance only in respect of complaints involving Business Unit staff, but may become involved in others in which contractors, students or visitors may be implicated.

If a complaint involves a staff member from another Business Unit or employer, the relevant HR Manager or Business Unit Leader may be informed, with the permission of the complainant.

Time spent on Equity and Diversity related activities

E&D Officer responsibilities are usually undertaken in conjunction with some other role, though Business Units may choose to create a dedicated position if justified by the demand.

The work of E&D Officers will be carried out as official duty, within the normal hours of attendance. Business Units will ensure that adequate time is made available to E&D Officers, to carry out their function. This will be discussed and agreed as part of the Annual Performance Agreement (APA) process, taking into account the expected demand and any other Equity and Diversity related activities that may be undertaken on behalf of the Business Unit. Discussion involving the E&D Officer's immediate manager and In Business HR Manager may be required to determine this.

E&D Officer's objectives and performance indicators should be included in their Annual Performance Agreement (APA).

Training

All E&D Officers will be provided with guidance and training on Equity and Diversity matters and on how they should undertake their responsibilities. Upon initial appointment a new E&D Officers will attend a program provided by an accredited EEO organisation. Thereafter, they should attend annual refresher programs to update their skills and knowledge. The particular program and funding for such development should be negotiated with the In Business HR Manager.

Resources

Resourcing of activities undertaken by the E&D Officers, on behalf of the Business Unit, will be negotiated with the In Business HR Manager, based on an agreed plan, which could include:

- purchase of training videos
- purchase of relevant Equity and Diversity literature
- providing training to staff
- holding seminars & catering for seminars
- inviting speakers relevant to training sessions

- inviting speakers to Equity and Diversity Network related activities
- allowing travel for Equity and Diversity Officers in remote locations to seminars, meetings, etc.

Actions Required

Workplace Diversity Plan

CSIRO reports annually on its performance against the CSIRO's Workplace Diversity Plan (see [References](#), as required under the *Equal Employment Opportunities (Commonwealth Authorities) Act 1987*).

Definitions

See [Human Resources Glossary of Terms](#).

Terms specific to this procedure:

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| Diversity | The collective mixture of characteristics that exists amongst staff or the community in general. It can refer to function, experience, discipline, education, socio-economic background, marital status, personality profile, gender, age, language, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, religion, family responsibility, physical/mental disability etc. |
| Workplace Diversity Plan | A Plan endorsed by the Chief Executive, that sets out commitments, objectives, strategies and performance indicators designed to improve CSIRO's performance in providing a work environment that is free of discrimination and harassment and promotes the benefits of creating an organisation that values diversity. |
| Equity and Diversity Officer | A member of staff nominated by the Business Unit Leader to assist staff who believe they may have suffered discrimination or harassment in the course of their employment. |

Resources

References

- [CSIRO Enterprise Agreement – Clause 55](#)
- [Equity and Diversity Officer Selection Criteria and Duty Statement \[Word 37KB\]](#)
- Guidelines - Equity and Diversity Officer Network

Further information

For further information please contact [Human Resources staff](#) or [HR Workplace Relations and Policy](#)

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