

# **ANS committee for Equity and Diversity**

## ***Goals & suggested methods***

### **1. Create high visibility for equity and diversity issues:**

*Goal:* To ensure that everything the ANS does considers gender equity

*Suggested method:* Develop a section of the website with resources designed to help promote gender equity:

- a) Create a logo, that will highlight equity issues, and which can be displayed at the meeting.
- b) Explore recording of keynotes/Young Investigator Award lecture for those unable to attend the conference or relevant session.
- c) List of members with relevant expertise to help generate potential speaker lists that are gender balanced.
  - a. e.g., keynotes, colloquium speakers, reviewers, examiners, ECR workshop speakers
- d) Information about caregiver, and future caregiver, support resources

### **2. Develop guidelines for conference organisers and the ANS committee/membership to engage in promotion of gender equity for:**

- (a) Plenary speakers
- (b) Recipients of awards
- (c) Symposia chairs and speakers
- (d) Committee membership and leadership
- (e) Other ANS activities, including ACAN

#### **(a) Plenaries:**

*Goal:* On average we should aim for equal numbers of men and women plenary speakers. A rolling 3 year average will be calculated each year to ensure we are achieving gender balance.

*Suggested method:* Generate separate lists of potential speakers for each gender. Select the top person from each list.

*Notes:* Data show women more often decline speaking invitations than men (for discussion see e.g. <https://www.nature.com/scitable/forums/women-in-science/women-reject-speaking-invitations-106452346>). To ensure the topic of the plenary is appropriate, conference organisers should prioritise the early recruitment of women speakers, then invite an appropriate speaker from the list of men to give balance across topic areas.

**(b) Other Awards:**

*Goal:* Cumulative evidence that our awards goes to excellent researchers in a gender equitable manner.

*Suggested methods:* Ensure that the selected symposia and symposia chairs are approved by the committee for Equity and Diversity.

Actively promote the award to women to encourage self-nomination, ensure explicit and objective criteria for awards, ensure transparent guidelines are used to create the short-list, and train award selection panels to factor in career disruptions, etc. Assess historical context to ensure equity is maintained over 3-5 year periods.

Generate separate lists of potential speakers for each gender. Select the top person from each list.

Provide tools for ensuring that the members of ANS are aware of their own unconscious bias.

Ensure that achievements and track records are assessed relative to opportunity, particularly with regard to metrics that have been shown to favour men over women.

**(c) Symposia chairs, conference opening and closing addresses:**

*Goal:* Equal numbers of women and men undertaking important, visible roles at the conference.

*Suggested method:* At the senior level, consider gender when inviting symposia chairs, and plenary speakers, consider gender when choosing symposia.

*Notes:* Use the list of ANS women members to identify session chairs, etc.

**(d) Leadership and committee membership, for all ANS committees:**

*Goals:* Equitable leadership and committee membership.

- Aim for at least one woman serving as President, President-elect, or Past-President each year (requires promotion of this goal to ensure adequate numbers of candidates).
- Aim for gender-equity in sharing organisational work (e.g., secretary, treasurer).

*Suggested method:* Actively promote the need for gender equity on the committee and leadership in the months prior to the annual conference.

- Provide details of positions and requirements well in advance of the annual conference.
- If insufficient nominations of either gender, use targeted approaches (i.e., head hunting).
- Ensure conference organisers are aware of gender equity and seek to have similar guidelines in place for their local organising committee.

**3. Develop guidelines for conference organisers and members to increase engagement of researchers with career commitments in conferences and other ANS events. Increase the opportunities for geographically remote members to engage with ANS (e.g., via web links, potential financial support).**

**(a) Family-friendly and diverse conferences**

*Goal:* Increase participation of caregivers in ANS conferences and increase the opportunities for members who cannot travel to the meeting to attend some talks via web links.

*Suggested method:*

- Family room to stream main room talks
  - o Allow people with children to watch at least main room talks from another room at the venue.
- Scheduling of keynote and networking events
  - o Consider scheduling some of these events at times other than evenings so carers have better opportunities to attend.
- Parenting facilities at conference venues
  - o Adequate feeding (breast feeding or other) and changing rooms at the venue.
- Provision of relevant information about childcare options
  - o List of local nanny/babysitting services
  - o On site/local day-care facility
- Consider some family-friendly social activities.
- Consider web links for members who cannot attend (e.g., for main talks).

**(b) Develop guidelines for a scheme to support parents (irrespective of gender) to attend conferences and engage with society activities. Develop a similar scheme to support attendance at the meeting by members from remote areas and surrounding regions (e.g., Southeast Asia).**

*(Note: this will be implemented when it is financially feasible; development will need to include clear assessment and selection criteria)*

- Caregiver-support bursary:
  - o Childcare subsidy for conference-site facilities or at home
  - o Travel costs for partner/carer to travel to meeting
- Diversity scheme:
  - o Conference registration and travel cost support for presenting members from regions outside Australia and New Zealand who do not have access to funding (or consider co-funding scheme)

**4. Data collection and analysis on gender and diversity distribution of participation and the**

## **membership over time**

### *Goal:*

- Gender representation at all levels that reflect the membership
- Members to be informed and (optionally) actively promoting gender equality in their own activities.

### *Suggested method:*

- Collect data (annually) on the gender of members through both conference registration and payment of membership fees so we know what ‘representative of the membership’ means.
  - o Use these data to explore the factors that might prevent members from attending conferences/engaging with the society.
- Collate conference data on gender of those undertaking key roles and recipients of awards, as outlined above, and include in conference report.
  - o Use these data to assess the efficacy of our approach and success in achieving equity.
- Explore need for other measures to support diversity including support for members with disabilities, members from poorer regions, etc.