



Gender Equity Plan

Australian Centre for Robotic Vision

November 2017

Equity & Diversity Statement

The Australian Centre for Robotic Vision strives to treat everyone in an unbiased and inclusive manner, and to remove barriers of disadvantage, for all of its members and the wider professional community.

We are committed to equitable treatment of all its members and elimination of discrimination in all its forms. An important part of this commitment is the recognition of the rights of all individuals to respect; and the acceptance of others without biases based on differences of any kind.

As the Centre is developing technologies that can impact all members of society, it is important that the Centre's personnel reflect the diversity of the community. Such diversity might include age, gender, gender orientation, sexuality, religion, indigenous status, non-English speaking background, race, disability, mental and physical health, pregnancy, parenting and other carer responsibilities.

A major issue faced in the fields of robotics and computer vision, and more broadly in computer science, is gender equity. According to the Computing Research Association the number of women relative to men in computing is decreasing¹. The Centre has an important role to play in helping to address this situation and will be richer for being more inclusive. Following the example of the Pleiades Gold award winning CAASTRO Diversity Policy², and the recently released ACEMS Equity & Diversity Program³, the Centre released this Gender Equity Plan in October 2017 for comment within the Centre. This is the final version incorporating feedback and views across the Centre.

The Plan

1. Collect information and set KPIs

The Centre will institute a number of gender-related KPIs, including: the number of women at various levels within the Centre, the number of female-led Centre-sponsored workshops, the number of female Centre visitors, gender targets for speakers and Scientific Organising Committee roles in conferences and workshops, the number of females who apply for jobs and those who are short-listed. Gender-based metrics are to be compiled every 12 months for review by the Executive Committee who will set KPIs and for oversight by our Centre Advisory Board.

2. Support gender diversity

Zero tolerance for exclusive behaviour

It is important to show no tolerance for behaviour that is not inclusive. This means challenging negative stereotypes that seek to explain the underrepresentation of women and minorities in computer science and tech in general. There is no place in the Centre for these views.

Decision-making

The Centre recognises that societal, cultural and psychological issues often affect women in the workplace. All Centre personnel should be aware of unconscious bias in their decision-making.

Flexible work arrangements

The Centre encourages flexible work arrangements to accommodate an individual's needs and responsibilities and to assist participation in the workforce.

Work hours

Centre personnel will be rewarded for their work effort and not on the number of hours spent in the office. Flexible hours are encouraged balanced with regular office working hours to encourage participation in the collegiate local atmosphere -- not to create the expectation that staff should always be available for work. No Centre personnel should be expected to work outside of normal working hours except via special arrangement. Working longer than standard hours on a regular or routine basis is not acceptable.

Social Activities

The Centre rejects the culture that 'real research happens over a beer after work'. Any organised social activity should respect equity and diversity and be held at a time and place suitable for all group members to avoid exclusion.

Children

Subject to University policy and OH&S compliance, children are welcome in the workplace, especially during the School Holidays. Children may also be permitted in meetings when child-care is not available.

Carer Responsibilities

Centre personnel are actively encouraged to draw on Carer's leave when required and as offered under University policy.

Meetings

When possible, all Centre meetings should take place at family friendly hours between the hours of 9:30am and 2:30pm, with consideration given to participants in other time zones. Children are permitted to attend meetings if child-care is not available. The ability to join meeting via videoconference should be arranged and meetings recorded if people are unable to attend.

Events/Conferences

Centre seminars and workshops should be streamed and openly disseminated wherever possible. The ability to join meeting via videoconference should be arranged and meetings recorded if people are unable to attend.

School holiday periods should be considered when scheduling major events, workshops or conferences, trying to avoid them where possible, as well as avoiding Mondays and Fridays where practicable (to avoid the necessity of weekend travel).

Childcare options should be available for the Centre's symposium each year, and the Centre will have a gender equity function, either a breakfast or lunch, at the symposium each year.

Any Centre-funded or sponsored conferences and workshops should consider: gender balanced Scientific Organising Committee; Local Organising Committee; Invited Speaker list; and Contributed Speaker list. The Centre will consider not supporting attendance of conferences that do not have adequate gender balance amongst organisers and participants.

Family/Carer travel

Dependent on individual University policies, the Centre will endeavour to support family or carer travel for personnel with primary carer responsibilities, to attend conferences where their children are under the age of 14 years.

Personal information

The use of a member's personal information, such as age, marital and parental status, in introductions, press coverage and reference letters status in reference letters, introductions and press coverage is strongly discouraged. All members must carefully

consider the relevance in disclosing such information and whether it is necessary. Permission must be sought before disclosing someone's personal information.

3. Support gender diversity in recruitment

The Centre will examine the diversity and gender composition of all Centre appointments and personnel categories, and where necessary set gender and diversity targets for hiring.

Where possible, the Centre will advertise multiple job vacancies simultaneously in order to encourage women's participation and assist with the "two body problem".

All positions within the Centre must be offered with a part-time option. The following standard wording must be used in all Centre job advertisements:

" The Australian Centre for Robotic Vision supports a flexible working environment. Subject to visa restrictions, the present position is available as either full-time or part-time positions. Women are strongly encouraged to apply. For information on the Australian Centre for Robotic Vision's benefits in regards to travel funding and assistance for families please contact info@roboticvision.org for an information sheet."

Job descriptions and selection criteria should be examined for exclusive or gendered language and content and care should be taken to ensure that all Centre materials are gender neutral, a balance in gender in robot names is also recommended.

4. Support gender diversity more broadly

At Events

Examine and challenge equity and diversity balance at national and international conferences, workshops and events sponsored by the Centre.

In Centre Representation

Outreach activities targeted to women are encouraged. All Centre materials should be gender neutral, with imagery reflecting a diverse and inclusive environment. A balance in gender in robot names is also recommended.

In Centre Actions

Actively support other relevant equity and diversity programs promoted by external groups, e.g., the SAGE symposium. "Call out" behaviour that is not consistent with the Centre's inclusive culture, wherever it occurs and whoever is responsible. This may include public commentary.

References

- 1 <http://cra.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Data-Trends-Women-in-Computing-Sloan.pdf>
- 2 <http://www.caastro.org/gender-action-toolkit>
- 3 <https://acems.org.au/acems-equity-diversity-program>