

Charter for AURA Committee on Workforce and Diversity

Preamble: AURA has a strong commitment to achieving a diverse workforce within its observatories and promoting education and outreach programs that will engage a diverse workforce for the future. The AURA Committee on Workforce and Diversity is designated subcommittee of the AURA Board of Directors. It will review activities and plans on an AURA wide basis aimed at broadening the participation of all groups in AURA and the field of astronomy in general. The Committee will report to and advise the AURA Board of Directors.

The overall goal of the Committee is to strengthen AURA's role in increasing the participation from underrepresented groups as well as institutions and geographic areas that have not had the opportunity to contribute to AURA's mission and the overall field of astronomy. This will contribute to AURA's objective and that of its funding agencies to preparing a diverse, globally engaged science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce.

Mission: The Committee will assess and track progress on (1) broadening participation and diversity of individuals within the AURA workforce; (2) educational and outreach programs carried out by AURA managed observatories aimed at broadening participation and diversity within the field of astronomy in general; and (3) activities within AURA governance that may contribute to the broadening of participation. The committee will meet twice annually and report to the AURA Member Representatives at the time of the AURA Annual Meeting.

Membership:

The Committee shall consist of ten (10) core members, six (6) of which are elected by the AURA Board.

At least one (1) of the core members shall be from the Member Representatives (MRs) or the Board of Directors, or in combination there from.

In addition to the six members elected by the AURA Board, one Diversity Advocate from each AURA managed observatory shall serve as a member on the Committee.

In addition to the core members, the AURA President is an ex officio member of the Committee.

Further, the Committee may elect up to two (2) additional members to add particular expertise to its membership as it deems appropriate or necessary.

Terms: Elected members shall serve for staggered terms of three (3) years and may serve no more than two (2) terms consecutively.

Quorum: A majority of Committee members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

Voting: All actions taken by the Committee shall be by majority vote.

Meetings: The Committee will hold two (2) regular meetings during the year, at least one of which shall be at an AURA managed observatory location. Between meetings, the Chair provides liaison with management and the AURA Board. Urgent matters are handled by mail ballot or conference calls at the option of the Chair.

Functions:

1. Annually elect its Chair and Vice Chair.
2. Review on an annual basis
 - AURA policies and “best practices” for recruitment, retention, etc.
 - Observatory workforce demographics (e.g. EEO submissions)
 - Observatory workplace “climate” issues that would pose an impediment to greater participation by under represented groups.
 - Observatory educational programs and other initiatives aimed at diversity
 - Those elements of AURA level reports and Observatory Program Plans and Annual Reports that track progress in broadening participation.
 - AURA governance including institutional membership
3. Prepare a report on Committee activities during the year to the Board of Directors for consideration and transmission by the Board to the Member Representatives at their Annual Meeting

Approved by the AURA Board of Directors 02/20/09