

American Thoracic Society
Diversity and Inclusion Policy

A core value of the ATS is to attain the highest level of respiratory health for all people. Achieving health equality requires placing equal value on all people, as well as implementing and maintaining focused societal efforts to address avoidable inequalities, along with historical and contemporary injustices. Diversity and inclusion are critical to achieving health equality.

Why Is Diversity Important?

- Diversity in life experiences provides diversity of thought.
- Diversity in composition of ATS meetings, activities, committees, and governance will ensure organizational decision-making that reflects a broad range of perspectives.
- Inclusivity is an important factor to consider in addressing organizational issues.
- Speaking invitations and invitations to serve in Editorial Boards of high-impact journals contribute to the profile of academic scholars and clinicians. Inviting under-represented members of the ATS community to participate in scholarly endeavors enhances their visibility, which provides an opportunity to create a national or international profile.
- Representation or formal presentations at scholarly venues (meetings, conferences, and symposia) is important to generate new collaborations, ideas, and directions in science; and for networking (e.g., meeting mentors and mentees).
- Diversity and inclusion ultimately enhance science and improve health outcomes

It is important that the ATS characterizes the diverse qualities of the ATS community and work conducted by members of the society (e.g., clinical practice guidelines, conference speakers/chairs, meetings, steering/organizing committees, standing committees, etc.) on local, national, and international levels to (i) ensure everyone is represented, (ii) provide role models, and (iii) foster a sense of community based on inclusivity.

The intent of this document is to enhance ATS diversity processes and further ensure their transparency, visibility, and impact.

Although diversity includes multiple characteristics (including, but not limited to, gender, race/ethnicity, age, socioeconomic status, language and culture, country of origin, sexual orientation, and physical disabilities), the ATS will focus first on gender, race/ethnicity, and years of experience, with the goal of reflecting the diversity of its membership on all of its standing bodies, committees, and activities.

Policy

- The ATS will use gender-neutral terms (e.g., ‘Chair’ instead of ‘Chairman’) in all Society communications.

- When co-sponsoring or jointly developing an activity, document or resource with another association (signatory, stakeholder, industry, or non-industry partner) the ATS will work collaboratively with the organization to encourage diversity. The ATS reserves the right *not* to cosponsor, approve or endorse events that do not align with this policy.

- The ATS will work with all of its conference planning groups (including Assembly Program Committees, the International Conference Committee, and the Education Committee) and aim to have a

commensurate percentage of committee participants be women (approximating the proportion of members who identify as women) as well as speakers at events that ATS runs or sponsors.

- The ATS will aim for inclusion of U.S. minority groups and in particular, under-represented racial/ethnic minorities (approximating the distribution of racial/ethnic minority groups among the membership of the ATS) in all of its activities.
- The ATS will aim to ensure that sessions at ATS-led or sponsored events reflect gender balance among participants such as moderators, panelists, speakers, whenever the content expertise permits.
- Similarly, the ATS will aim to ensure that U.S. minorities, and in particular under-represented minorities, are appropriately included and will continue to advocate for inclusion of junior faculty and trainees in its core committees and on conference planning committees for meetings that the ATS hosts/cohosts.

Awareness and Reporting

To ensure broad awareness of this policy, the ATS will:

1. Post this policy on the ATS website.
2. E-mail the speaker invitation policy to all faculty (speakers and chairs).
3. Reference this policy in conference/meeting materials (e.g., programs, handbooks) with which the ATS is involved, including links to the ATS website.
4. Highlight this policy in the opening announcements of meetings/conferences that the ATS participates in (referencing the full documents available on the ATS website).
5. Report metrics to reflect accountability on the ATS website.

ATS Assemblies

Specific Recommendations

- Assemblies, comprised of assembly chairs, program chairs, planning chairs, the web director, the nominating committee, and working group chairs, should be balanced by gender, race/ethnicity, and discipline to better reflect the society and the communities served by the assembly.
- Assemblies will advocate that diverse representation occurs in an equitable manner in events that it hosts/cohosts, and in nominations for awards originating from the assembly.
- Assemblies will advocate that diverse representation occurs in documents (such as guidelines or working group papers) and projects that originate from the assembly.

Assembly Programming

- Programming for the ATS International Conference will be allotted to high-quality researchers/presenters representing the broad diversity of the ATS community. In this regard, the Assemblies should aim to achieve diversity across gender, race/ethnicity, and years of experience.
- Assemblies will aim to have a percentage of participants be women (approximating the proportion of members who identify as women) on conference organizing committees and as speakers and/or moderators at events that ATS runs or sponsors.
- Assemblies will aim for inclusion of U.S. minorities, and in particular under-represented racial/ethnic minorities, (approximating the distribution of racial/ethnic minority groups among the membership of the ATS) on conference organizing committees and as speakers at events that ATS runs or sponsors.
- Assemblies will track speaker and delegate metrics at all events in which it participates, leads or sponsors/co-sponsors.

Reporting Metrics

Assemblies will track statistics annually and review them at the Assembly leadership level as well as the Assembly Chair Forum to ensure that they are achieving their goals.

Report metrics will reflect various aspects of diversity including:

- Gender
- Racial/ethnic minority involvement, in particular under-represented minority involvement
- Early career professional involvement (within 5 years of first faculty appointment)
- Trainee involvement (undergraduate/postgraduate/international)

Committees

Specific Recommendations

- Committees, comprised of a Chair, Vice Chair(s), and appointed members should be balanced by gender, race/ethnicity, and discipline to better reflect the society and the communities served by the ATS.
- Committees will advocate that diverse representation occurs in an equitable manner in all activities and deliverables that they oversee, working groups that they organize, and new ideas or requests originating from the Committee.
- The ATS will aim for representation of U.S. under-represented racial/ethnic minorities appointed onto standing committees.
- The ATS will aim for a percentage of members appointed onto standing committees be women.
- Committee-based webinars, podcasts, networking centers and events will aim to have a percentage of participants on organizing committees, speakers and/or moderators be women.
- Committee-based webinars, podcasts, networking centers and events will aim for inclusion of U.S. under-represented racial/ethnic on organizing committees and as speakers and/or moderators.

Awareness

- The Health Equality and Diversity Committee and Planning and Evaluation Committee will jointly conduct an audit of the standing Committee charges and benchmarks to identify specific opportunities to integrate and implement the Society's diversity policy and make recommendations to the Executive Committee.
- Committees with Conference and Membership-centric deliverables (e.g. the Education Committee, International Conference Committee, and the Membership Committee) will ensure that the ATS diversity policy is incorporated into all future learning formats and membership initiatives.

Reporting Metrics

The ATS Health Equality and Diversity Committee will receive annual outcomes reports on implementation of the Society's diversity policy and make recommendations based on their review of these reports to improve representation for future events and activities.

Metrics will reflect various aspects of diversity including:

- Gender
- Racial/ethnic minority involvement and in particular, under-represented minority involvement
- Early career professional involvement (within 5 years of first faculty appointment)
- Trainee involvement (undergraduate/postgraduate/international)