

EDITORIAL

Equity, Inclusion, and Justice: An Opportunity for Action for AMS Publications Stakeholders

KEYWORDS: Administration; Editorial


This year (2023), the American Meteorological Society (AMS) started undertaking an organization-wide [equity assessment](#) to understand the experiences of members and staff with regard to inclusion, equity, justice, accessibility, and diversity at AMS. The equity assessment process will gather this information through a culture survey in mid-September and follow-up focus groups. The equity assessment process is being conducted with care and rigor. The AMS Council and leadership want a data-driven understanding that reflects a wide range of backgrounds and experiences, and they have set a goal of *at least 50% of AMS members participating*. The AMS Publications Commission strongly encourages all AMS publications enterprise stakeholders (readers, authors, reviewers, and editors) to participate when the survey is released in September.

The American Meteorological Society has already adopted policies and practices that promote inclusion, equity, justice, accessibility, and diversity throughout all aspects of the Society's work. Inclusion is the active and deliberate pursuit of creating a society in which all are welcome, respected, valued, and able to participate and contribute. Equity means that people are supported with what they individually need to be successful. Justice is treating all fairly by dismantling barriers to opportunities, resources, and decision-making. Accessibility is providing equitable access to everyone along the continuum of human ability and experience. Diversity is the outcome of creating inclusive, equitable, accessible, and just organizations and systems.

These values must be intentionally and actively fostered. Policies and practices that aim simply for neutrality with respect to bias ignore the systemic obstacles faced by individuals and communities who are underrepresented in the weather, water, and climate enterprise. Actively dismantling/reducing these obstacles is necessary to establish a culture of inclusion. Such efforts cannot be left to those already laboring under various forms of bias. Everyone has a role, especially those in positions of power and influence.

All of these ideas apply to scientific publishing. The AMS Publications Commission commits to taking an active role in carrying out AMS policies on inclusion. We will make a substantive contribution through the parts of the scientific process for which we are responsible, and we will make inclusion a standard and central practice rather than an afterthought.

- The Publications Commission and its chief editors will increase the diversity of our editorial boards and reviewers. In doing so, we will provide the support and training needed for our editors and associate editors to succeed in their roles and to prepare them for leadership opportunities.
- We will provide or create training materials to help editors and reviewers understand the many forms that bias can take as well as the steps that can be taken to address and overcome those biases. Such steps include recognizing and reducing bias in reviews, promoting the work of scholars from underrepresented groups, and creating room for new ideas and approaches.
- We will intervene when authors, reviewers, or editors are determined to have exhibited bias or prejudice. We expect rapid correction of inadvertent mistakes. Persistent or repeated misbehavior may lead to punitive action under the AMS Codes of Ethics and Professional Conduct. In other words, inclusion will be taken as seriously as any other matter of scientific integrity.
- Working with AMS Publications Department staff, we will assess accessibility issues and technical solutions as an integral part of our ongoing evaluation and improvement process for the platforms we use for presenting publishing guidelines and for submitting, reviewing, and publishing research articles, with the aim of enabling the widest possible accessibility to all.
- We welcome all in the scientific publishing world to tell us when we fall short of these ideals or suggest additional ways to improve. We are committed to learning and improving. Only by recognizing our mistakes can we then act to correct them and reduce their frequency. By the same token, recognizing what we are doing right will help to reinforce good practices, so we welcome honest appraisals of all kinds.

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Last, we commit to regularly reevaluating our work in the light of evolving standards to ensure we continue to do all we can to promote a culture in which inclusion, equity, justice, accessibility, and diversity are intentionally pursued and actively created. We look forward to seeing the results of this fall's culture survey, and we expect it to serve as a baseline measurement for understanding where the AMS publications enterprise in particular stands: where we have strengths, and where we can improve.

Please contact us at amspubs@ametsoc.org about any issues, questions, or suggestions related to the points listed above or any other aspects of inclusion, equity, justice, accessibility, and diversity.

AMS Publications Commission