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SuperSolar EDI Plan

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| Objective | Actions to be taken | Lead Responsibility | Description of Action | Outline Date |
|--|--|--------------------------|--|---------------------|
| Leadership | | | | |
| 1. Improve the diversity of the core membership of the Network+ management, advisory board and delivery staff. | 1.1 To work with EPSRC to develop best practice guidelines on increasing the diversity of the management & advisory board and delivery staff | PI and EPSRC energy lead | The membership of the SuperSolar Industrial Advisory Board was refreshed during June 2020. Seven new members joined the IAB, out of which 2 are female and 2 are BAME. The IAB now comprises a total of 12 members drawn from industry and the diversity of the IAB has been greatly improved. Several other female candidates were identified and approached during the refresh process but declined the invitation to participate. Anecdotal evidence suggest that senior female industry figures receive many similar invitations and with limited time available, cannot commit to them all. | Completed in year 2 |
| | 1.2 To manage new appointments to the Network+ management to achieve better balance of underrepresented groups | PI | The composition of the SuperSolar Management board remains the same, but steps have been taken to achieve a more balanced group by encouraging each partner to invite an ECR to attend meetings. | On going |
| | 1.3 Develop appropriate targets informed by data for the ethic and gender balance across the management & advisory board and delivery staff. | PI and EPSRC energy lead | Appropriate data has been difficult to identify. However, anecdotal evidence indicates that female and BAME remain under-represented across the PV industry. The diversity of the IAB has been boosted. Females will be prioritised should any vacancies arise. | On going |
| Challenging bias and ensuring inclusive processes | | | | |
| 2. Raise awareness of and take steps to remove the impact of unintentional bias in systems, process, | 2.1 Evaluate the funding allocation processes utilized in previous Hub delivery | PI and Project manager | The process for I&I Fund awards was evaluated and was found to be appropriate. Applicant anonymity is maintained during both review and Grants Committee meetings leading to the award decision. However, scope for further improvement has been identified, and it has been emphasised to the Grants Committee that all members should contribute towards the review process, giving written input before Grants Committee meetings. | Completed in Year 1 |

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| behaviours and cultures | | | | |
| | 2.2 Raise awareness amongst the delivery team, MB and AB of the effects of unconscious bias and equip staff to challenge bias | PI and Project manager | All Management Board members now undergo mandatory unconscious bias training, supplied by their own institutions. Further unconscious bias training has been facilitated by the Supergen Energy Networks Hub. This training was offered to all Network members via the SuperSolar newsletter and Events Calendar and was attended by the SuperSolar Project Manager. Before any Grant Committee or in discussions to identify speakers for conferences and meetings, the PI will remind panel members about the Network's commitment to encourage diversity. | Completed in year 1 |
| 3. Ensure funding is not influenced by gender or other protected characteristics | 3.1 To collect, monitor and report equality data on all funding applications to Network+ | Project manager | The application process for all SuperSolar awards will be updated so that diversity data can be collected in line with GDPR legislation. A GDPR compliant process will be developed to yield useful diversity data, including questions on gender identity, disability, and caring responsibilities. | On going monitoring and reporting |
| | 3.2 To remove any potential barriers or bias in review processes and inform any revisions to the systems in place. | Project manager | In efforts to removed potential barriers, a long lead time has been given to the deadline for the current round of I&I Fund, which has also sought to avoid school holidays. Webinars with instruction about how to submit I&I applications are planned to be rolled out for future calls, with a view to enabling ECR applicants. | To be completed in year 4 |
| Leading and supporting change in the solar community | | | | |
| 4. Show leadership to change culture, practices and makeup of the solar community | 4.1 To commission research to understand more about the barriers to increased participation of underrepresented groups in solar research | PI and EPSRC energy lead | SuperSolar has joined together with the other Supergen hubs to gather data by surveying their members. A short survey was designed by Supergen Energy Networks Hub to try and identify barriers to attending events or submitting applications for funding. From this study it was clear that the majority felt that they had less time for research related activities in the last year, and for a significant number this was due to increased childcare responsibilities. Some reasons for not attending events were also consistently highlighted, such as encountering the same speakers, male dominated speaker panels, childcare commitments and regional variation in school holidays. Moving | Completed in year 2 |

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| | | | towards Athena-Swan recommended meeting hours for SuperSolar meetings and events has been made easier with web-based events and SuperSolar will commit to scheduling 80% of UK based meetings within those hours. SuperSolar will collect gender data for events it organises. | |
| | 4.2 To develop web-based events designed specifically to raise the profile of underrepresented groups through success stories | Project Manager | The move to online events has presented the opportunity to use web-based events as a tool with greater reach than static marketing materials as a pathway to raise the profile of underrepresented groups within solar PV. SuperSolar, in combination with the Institute of Physics has developed a webinar series “The Role of Solar Technologies in Sustainable Development” that joins work undertaken in the wider field of solar research, such as policy development and societal engagement, with those of PV materials research to present diverse perspectives in the field. All speakers are female with the goal of promoting positive female role models in solar. Reach and feedback has been very encouraging, and this is anticipated to be an ongoing series. A web event will be organised presenting diverse role models (with an emphasis on BAME speakers) in solar research talking about their career journeys and achievements in the field. | On going |
| | 4.3 To develop funding mechanisms to actively enable carers to engage with the Network and participate in activities | Project Manager | SuperSolar institutions will work to access the EPSRC Caring Responsibilities Fund. A SuperSolar Childcare Fund to cover costs associated with additional childcare needs associated with engagement in SuperSolar activities will be rolled out. This is intended to support attendance at SuperSolar events for presenters and participants. | To be completed in year 3 |