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ACCESS+ Offers a Free DEI Self-Assessment for Professional Societies

The EEST is a tool that assesses and benchmarks organizational DEI efforts

WASHINGTON, DC, July 29, 2023 – The Amplifying the Alliance to Catalyze Change for Equity in STEM Success (ACCESS+) is excited to offer the [Equity Environmental Scanning Tool \(EEST\)](#) for free under a Creative Commons license.

The EEST is a comprehensive DEI self-assessment tool. In addition to assisting professional societies in discerning both strengths and areas for attention, it also centralizes data and provides direction for actionable changes. “We hope this self-assessment tool will help professional societies with their organizational DEI change work as they determine their areas of growth and strength,” says Dr. Ershela Sims, PI of ACCESS+ and Executive Director of WEPAN.

The EEST is comprised of three sections. The first section is organized according to twelve functional areas that are typical of society operation, such as membership and publishing. The second section asks for information on a series of DEI performance measurement questions for each of the twelve areas. The third section consists of open-ended questions to identify society DEI successes and challenges.

“By conducting inclusive and intersectional data collection and analysis, a professional society can ensure that all constituents are part of the reflection and change process,” says Dr. Heather Metcalf, an ACCESS+ co-PI and Director of Research at WEPAN. “The more diverse and thorough the input included in the data collection process, the more comprehensive and useful the EEST results will be.”

The EEST builds on the collaborative work of the Science Council’s and the Royal Academy of Engineering’s Diversity and Progression Framework for Professional Societies (Progression Framework). The UK’s Royal Academy of Engineering, the Royal Society of Biology, and the Institute of Physics are all acknowledged for their support in helping translate the use of the Progression Framework for use in the United States.

The ACCESS+ team appreciates the engagement of the societies comprising the first cohort of ACCESS and the Northwestern University Scientific Careers Research and Development Group for their help in piloting and refining EEST for use with US Professional Societies.

The ACCESS+ initiative seeks to catalyze intersectional gender equity in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professional society spaces. By leveraging the expertise and networks of the ACCESS+ collective, the ACCESS+ team aims to bring about systemic, nation-wide transformation in support of more inclusive STEM academic professional cultures.

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About ACCESS+:

The Amplifying the Alliance to Catalyze Change for Equity in STEM Success (ACCESS+) Initiative, funded by National Science Foundation (NSF) ADVANCE Partnership grant #2017953, aspires to leverage STEM professional societies to accelerate systemic STEM culture change to advance intersectional diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). Led by the Women in Engineering ProActive Network (WEPAN), partners on the grant include the ADVANCE Implementation Mentors (AIM) Network; the NSF INCLUDES Aspire Alliance: National Change Initiative; the ADVANCE Resource and Coordination (ARC) Network; and the Alliance to Catalyze Change for Equity in STEM Success (ACCESS). To learn more, visit accessplus.com.

About WEPAN:

WEPAN is a non-profit educational organization founded in 1990. Recognized as the leading champion in North America for leveraging research and best practices to propel the inclusion of women in the field of engineering, WEPAN advocates to fully embrace diversity, equity and inclusion to meet the demands of today's innovation and performance-driven business culture. Dedicated to advancing cultures of inclusion and diversity in engineering higher education and workplaces, WEPAN connects people, research, and practice to increase participation, retention and success of women and other under-represented groups in engineering from college to executive leadership. To learn more, visit www.wepan.org.