



## ICRS EDI STRATEGY 2020 – 2023

July 2020

### INTRODUCTION

#### ICRS Policy on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The mission of the International Cannabinoid Research Society (ICRS) is to advance cannabinoid research and to create a global community of support and recognition of the achievements of cannabinoid researchers. The Society's mission is supported by the philosophical underpinning of excellence, integrity, and social responsibility, with equality, diversity and inclusion as our core values. We are committed to utilising these principles to develop and implement policy, direct the society's mission, activities, and procedural conduct.

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are intertwined and create the foundation for the collective strengthening of our scientific community from a diverse pool of internal and external stakeholders.

Over the past 12 months, the following initiatives have been implemented to build our EDI ethos:

- Establishment of an EDI Committee
- Publication of an EDI statement (<https://www.icrs.co/ICRS.EDI.STATEMENT.6.5.2020.pdf>)
- Publication of a statement denouncing individual and systemic racism (<https://icrs.co/EDI/ICRS.2020.06.05.RACISM.STATEMENT.pdf>)
- Review of the composition of the ICRS 2020 Scientific Programme Committee and awards selection committee composition for gender balance
- Development of a three-year EDI strategy (2020 – 2023) (<https://www.icrs.co/AboutUs.html#Policies>)

We present our EDI Strategy for 2020 – 2023 in this document. This strategy has been developed by our EDI Committee, in partnership with the Board of Directors. The strategy has a term of three years, and will be subject to review and revision at the end of this period. If you have any suggestions or feedback, please let us know at [EDI@icrs.co](mailto:EDI@icrs.co).

Dr. David Finn, President of ICRS

Dr. Vanessa Ho, Chair of the ICRS EDI Committee

Dr. Melanie Kelly, Executive Director of ICRS

#### ICRS EDI Statement (<https://www.icrs.co/ICRS.EDI.STATEMENT.6.5.2020.pdf>)

A great strength of the International Cannabinoid Research Society (ICRS) is the diversity of its membership. Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are central to the values, ethos and mission of the ICRS – to advance cannabinoid research and to support and celebrate the achievements of cannabinoid researchers of all races, ethnicities, religions, nationalities, mental or physical abilities, ages, gender identities and sexual orientations. The ICRS strives to uphold the highest standards of humanity and integrity for its members, and advocates for social accountability, equality, and respect for human rights within civil society, governments, and scientific organisations.

## **Governance of EDI in the ICRS**

The ICRS Board of Directors is the governing body and is responsible for directing and approving all EDI initiatives of the society. The EDI committee is responsible for making recommendations to the Board of Directors and for facilitating EDI initiatives approved by the Board. The Chair of the EDI committee is a non-voting member of the ICRS Board of Directors and is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the strategy with the collective input from the EDI Committee.

Members of the EDI Committee are:

Dr. Vanessa Ho, Chair  
Associate Dean for Culture, Development and Inclusion  
Reader in Pharmacology and Inclusive Practice  
St. George's University of London, UK

Dr. Damian Cohall  
Deputy Dean (Pre-clinical)  
Senior Lecturer in Pharmacology  
The University of the West Indies, Barbados

Dr. Rebecca Craft  
Herbert L. Eastlick Professor of Psychology  
Washington State University, USA

Dr. Haley Vecchiarelli  
Postdoctoral Fellow  
University of Victoria, Canada

## **ICRS EDI STRATEGIC INITIATIVES (2020 – 2023)**

### **ICRS EDI Vision**

Equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) are core values of ICRS. We aim to uphold a fair and inclusive organisational culture and to provide a welcoming environment for researchers to share knowledge and develop collaborations.

### **EDI Strategic Objectives**

Key EDI considerations in this strategy include gender, differently abled persons, ethnicity, geographical representation, caregiving responsibility, and socio-economic inequality. To embed EDI in ICRS activities, we have identified four strategic objectives, namely:

- i. Consider and act on equality, diversity and inclusion issues in our membership to broaden participation in ICRS activities
- ii. Promote and provide training opportunities for our membership and conference delegates, in a manner which is equitable and inclusive
- iii. Maintain an environment of respect, equality, diversity and inclusion at ICRS conferences
- iv. Consider and act on equality, diversity and inclusion issues in regard to recognising scholarship within the scientific community

The corresponding actions for each of these objectives reflect our commitment to members and would-be members, as part of our effort to promote scientific advances in cannabinoid and cannabis research.

- i. Consider and act on equality, diversity and inclusion issues in our membership to broaden participation in ICRS activities:
  - Expand our reach to diverse audiences through social media and other digital communications
  - Using empirical data, diversify ICRS membership in terms of ethnicity, geographical representation and other minoritized groups.
  - Remove sponsorship requirement for pre-doctoral membership and post-doctoral membership.
  - Diversify the leadership and committees of the ICRS
  - Identify regional ambassadors to be champions for cannabinoid research and for the ICRS in different jurisdictions
  - Develop and publish a Code of Conduct for ICRS members and conference delegates (e.g. professional conduct towards other members/delegates/trainees, scientific integrity). All new or renewing members and conference registrants will confirm they have read and will comply with the Code of Conduct
  - Develop a reporting mechanism (with the option for anonymity) for feedback and incident reports, and an action plan for responding to inappropriate conduct. Include questions relating to this in annual satisfaction survey.
  
- ii. Promote and provide training opportunities for our membership and conference delegates, in a manner that is equitable and inclusive:
  - Investigate inclusive mechanisms for trainees to become members of ICRS
  - Expand networking and mentorship opportunities for trainees
  - Develop online programming to provide more accessible training opportunities for geographically dispersed membership
  - Establish small collaboration grants for trainees and young investigators
  - Promote corporate responsibility and engagement with EDI initiatives among industry and affiliate members.
  
- iii. Maintain an environment of respect, equality, diversity and inclusion at ICRS conferences:
  - Establish a Code of Conduct for ICRS conferences, to describe behaviours and standards that members and participants are expected to uphold; all registrants will be required to confirm they have read and agree to comply with the Code of Conduct.
  - Develop a reporting mechanism (with the option for anonymity) for feedback and incident reports and an action plan for responding to inappropriate conduct. Include questions relating to this in annual satisfaction survey.
  - Review trainee travel awards process to ensure it supports inclusion and diversity at our annual symposium.
  - Use registration form and feedback from post-conference surveys to enhance access to ICRS conferences, with due regard to on-site child care and physical accessibility. The ICRS could establish relationships with approved service providers to render this service at the meeting sites and indemnify the society from liability.
  - Develop virtual events
  
- iv. Consider and act on equality, diversity and inclusion issues in regard to recognising scholarship within the scientific community:
  - Maintain pre-doctoral and post-doctoral presentation prizes
  - Diversify awardees for the Young Investigator Award, Mechoulam Award, and Career Achievement Award.
  - Review membership of award and program committees. Strive for representation across ethnicity, gender and geographical spectra.

## **Monitoring and Evaluating the Effectiveness of the EDI Strategy**

The EDI committee will work with the Board of Directors and other committees of the ICRS to implement, monitor and evaluate the corresponding actions of each objective. An EDI monitoring and evaluation framework will be established that includes targets, timescales and responsibilities. A report of the monitoring and evaluation framework will be presented at the Board of Directors meetings to help ensure execution and relevance of the EDI Strategy, as well as a yearly report to the ICRS membership at the Annual Business Meeting and upon completion of the strategy timeline (at which time a new strategy and goals will be established).

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

The ICRS acknowledges the efforts of the EDI Committee and the Board of Directors who participated in the development of the EDI Strategy 2020 – 2023. We are thankful in advance to the members and non-members who will comply with policies and actions to support the strategy.