

List of Leading Questions for FADC members working with faculty search committees

This is a list of questions to pose to the diversity advocate of a search committee if you are unsure how to advise or assess their efforts. It mostly copies OIE's Inclusive Search and Recruitment Toolkit.

Regarding the Job Posting

Ask to read over the job posting/description. Ask yourself if the language it has around diversity sounds welcoming and inviting to a person of color or woman, or if it sounds like legalese intended to protect the university from lawsuits. Has the posting articulated the department's commitment to diversity? Ask yourself if the published qualifications have or could have racial or gender bias. Is there some other way to state qualifications to remove the appearance of bias? Are minority communities or women being excluded or made to feel unwelcome by any of the language being used in the ad? Does the language in the ad make women or persons of color feel like this is a welcoming community for people that look like them?

Generating Diverse Applicant Pools

Have you invited anyone personally to apply to the position? Have you contacted any people of color or women that you know in this field and invited them to apply personally? Have other members of the committee done so?

If you are reaching out personally to some candidates, you could challenge yourself to also reach out personally to a woman and a minority candidate for each white candidate that you invite personally to apply.

What are the major job posting venues for this field? (Examples: trade journals, scholarly journals, scholarly or professional organizations, commonly used online job boards.) Do any of these venues cater to minority communities or women in this field? Have you looked for job posting venues in this field that cater to minority communities or women in this field? Have you published the job posting in any venues that cater to or has disproportionate impact for minority communities or women in this field?

What are the major conferences at which universities recruit new faculty members in this field? (Examples: scholarly or professional organizations.) Is a member of the search committee going to any of these conferences who can spread the word about your faculty recruitment effort? Do any of these conferences cater to minority communities or women in this field? Are you, or another member of the search committee, going to go to a conference that caters to women or underrepresented minorities to spread the word about your faculty recruitment effort?

If you are already going to the “major conference” in this field, you could challenge yourself to send someone from the committee to a “minor conference” in addition, as long as that “minor conference” has a more diverse group of attendees.

Are there any professional organizations in this field specifically for women or underrepresented minorities? Have you contacted any professional organizations in this field that focus on women or underrepresented minorities to see if there are opportunities to advertise your job posting via their organization?

Are there any list serves in this field for women or underrepresented minorities? Can you access those lists with your posting?

Are there programs in this field at any historically black colleges? Have you reached out to the departments/programs in any historically black colleges with your job posting to ask them to share it with their recent graduates?

Are there programs in this field at any women’s colleges? Have you reached out to any departments/programs in women’s colleges with your job posting to ask them to share with their recent graduates?

Who are the leading figures in this field who are women? Who are the leading figures in this field who are persons of color? What universities do those luminaries teach at? Have you reached out to those departments/programs directly with your job posting for them to share with their recent graduates?

If money is brought up as a barrier to doing any of these additional things, then tell them that is a terrible excuse (but do it nicely). Suggest that they should ask for the additional money to pursue a more diverse applicant pool – or better yet offer to go with them to ask for the money. They should ask their department chair first, if the answer is no, ask the dean, if the answer is still no, avail themselves of the provost recruitment diversity initiative: <https://provost.utexas.edu/faculty-recruitment-diversity-initiative> But the answer is going to be yes (within reason). This would be for costs like attending additional conferences, placing additional ads, or bringing to campus an additional finalist who is a minority candidate or woman.

Evaluating Applicants without Bias

See OIE Inclusive Search and Recruitment Toolkit (chapter 2)

Interview Process

Ensure equal treatment. Period.

This is also covered in the OIE Inclusive Search and Recruitment Toolkit.