


AVS POLICY: PROMOTING EQUITY DATE: 11/12/17

	Date Created: 11/12/17	Author: Gilda Tachedjian
	Date modified: 15/11/18	Author: Heidi Drummer

1. STATEMENT ON EQUITY.

The AVS has a strong commitment to promote inclusiveness and equity and prevent discrimination. This includes ensuring appropriate inclusion of different ethnicity, genders, early career researchers and researchers from different states and institutions across Australasia.

2. GENDER EQUITY

2.1 Statement on gender equity.

AVS aims to achieve a gender balance that reflects our male to female membership in all aspects of the society's activities including committee membership and scientific meetings. AVS intends to achieve this gender balance during the process of nominations and selections for AVS committees and in our meetings through the selection of session chairs, invitation of high quality invited international and national speakers, and the selection of speakers from submitted abstracts.

2.2 Practice towards achieving gender equity.

The AVS local organizing committee will consider suggestions for achieving gender equity and diversity of meetings as outlined in Appendix A, and any other suggestions raised by members of the AVS. The LOC should review these suggestions and consider them in their program discussions.

After consideration, the LOC should implement any actions that improve the gender balance, participation and diversity of the AVS meeting that are deemed appropriate and feasible with consideration to resources and facilities.

Specifically, the AVS local organising committee (LOC) will actively nominate at least 40% female representation in selection of session chairs, invited national speakers, and oral abstracts for each biannual meeting.

In the process of selection of the international invited speakers for the plenary session, the AVS will ensure that at least one female is nominated for each meeting with a 50% female representation to be achieved when considered as an average over the past 4 meetings.

The LOC shall consider gender equity and diversity issues when selecting entertainment for social events conducted at any meeting as outlined in Appendix A. Some or all of the suggested actions in Appendix A will be implemented as appropriate and feasible as determined by the local organizing committee.

3. COMPLAINTS

3.1 Process for lodging a complaint relating to discrimination, bullying or harassment.

All complaints will be handled in a strictly confidential manner.

Any AVS member or candidate member who feels the principles embodied in this document have not been upheld should contact a member of the AVS committee who will raise the issue to the AVS Executive's attention without prejudice.

3.2 Harassment, bullying and discrimination at AVS meetings.

Any AVS member or candidate member who believes they have been the subject of harassment, discrimination or bullying at an AVS meeting should write a formal letter of complaint addressed to the President who will bring the complaint to the attention of the executive committee.

Any person raising such a complaint should seek advice through their employer and pursue their employer's recommended course of action for dealing with such a complaint.

If the complaint is upheld, the person making the complaint should notify the President of the AVS.

The AVS reserves the right to ban any person from subsequent AVS meetings who has had a complaint of bullying, discrimination or harassment upheld against them.

4. Metrics on AVS achievements in gender equity

The following illustrates our past and current performance on gender equity, which will be monitored and updated biannually following each AVS Scientific meeting.

AVS membership balance

AVS Meeting Year	Males	Females	Percentage Female
2017	96	93	49
2015	95	115	55
2013	88	94	52
2011	101	103	51

AVS POLICY: PROMOTING EQUITY DATE: 4/12/2017

AVS 2019

	Males	Females	Percentage Female	Relative to Target
Committee	6	7	54	Above target
AVS 10 LOC	5	6	54	Above target
Scientific Meeting (Lead speaker)				
Scientific Meeting (Session Chair)				
Scientific Meeting (Oral presentation)				
Scientific Meeting (Oral-Poster presentation)				
Scientific Meeting (Poster presentation)				

AVS 2017

	Males	Females	Percentage Female	Relative to Target
Committee	8	7	47	Above target
AVS9 LOC	12	4	25	Below target
Scientific Meeting (Lead speaker)	7	13	65	Above target
Scientific Meeting (Session Chair)	15	13	48	Above Target
Scientific Meeting (Oral presentation)	25	23	48	Above Target
Scientific Meeting (Oral-Poster presentation)	8	6	43	On Target

Scientific Meeting (Poster presentation)	53	41	43	On Target
---	----	----	-----------	-----------

AVS 2015

	Males	Females	Percentage Female	Relative to Target
Committee	13	4	24	Below target
AVS8 LOC	7	4	36	Below target
Scientific Meeting (Lead speaker)	8	4	33	Below target
Scientific Meeting (Session Chair)	12	10	45	Above target
Scientific Meeting (Oral presentation)	16	20	56	Above target
Scientific Meeting (Oral-Poster presentation)	8	11	58	Above target
Scientific Meeting (Poster presentation)	51	61	55	Above target

AVS 2013

	Males	Females	Percent Female	Relative to target
Committee	8	3	27	Below target
Scientific Meeting (lead speaker)	10	2	16	Below target
Scientific Meeting (Session Chair)	11	3	21	Below target
Scientific Meeting (Oral presentation)	38	26	41	On target
Scientific Meeting (Poster Presentation)	38	54	59	Above target

AVS past Committees/LOCs

*note, small committee numbers, prior to constitutional changes

	Males	Females	Percentage Female	Relative to target
AVS 6 - 2011	9	1	10	Below target
AVG 5 - 2009	7	4	36	Below target
AVG 4 - 2007	4	2	33	Below target
AVG 3 - 2005	5	2	29	Below target

Appendix A

Suggested initiatives for AVS to support equity and diversity

The Australasian virology society is committed to achieving gender equity and diversity at its scientific conferences and more generally in Australia's virology workforce. Major issues continue to face women in science that restrict (1) their opportunities to establish networks, (2) initiate and maintain collaborations with other groups, (3) invitations to speak, (4) chair scientific sessions (5) being overlooked as major contributors to work whether intellectual contribution or technical. Together these factors culminate to impact the career trajectory of women and carer's in science and impact the diversity of our scientific meetings and ultimately their quality. The AVS see this as a major impediment to full utilization of its workforce, retention of its workforce in virology and to conducting and advancing innovative research. This document outlines a range of initiatives that can be used to provide a more gender equitable and diverse forum at AVS conferences. Some or all of the suggested actions in this Appendix should be considered by the local organizing committee and implemented as appropriate and feasible.

- 1. Supporting parents and care-givers at conferences to increase networking opportunities**
 - a. Encouraging baby-wearing and children during poster sessions, break-out rooms, workshops, tea and lunch breaks, dinners and receptions.
 - b. Family friendly welcome/conclusion reception to allow networking opportunities for parents/care-givers. Earlier start time to fit with child-friendly hours (e.g. 4 or 5 PM onwards)
 - c. Parent/care-giver dedicated networking/social event
 - d. Provide a list of options for childcare during conference
 - e. Consideration for AVS providing social programs for children during meeting

- 2. Access to content of AVS conferences for parents and care-givers.**
 - a. Parenting room for viewing talks
 - b. Offering parents/care-givers the option to select when they present to best suit their schedule
 - c. Recording of keynote presentations/plenaries for remote viewing via a secure link to registered users
 - d. Zoom presentations for people to provide oral presentations who cannot attend in person

- 3. Tackle unconscious and conscious bias as it relates to invited keynote/plenary presentations, abstract review and selection process for oral presentations**
 - a. Compulsory UCB training/awareness for all abstract reviewers
 - b. Compulsory UCB training/awareness for all committee members
 - c. Blinded review of abstract submissions
 - d. Process for declaring conflicts of interest to prevent conscious bias
 - e. Ensure gender balance of program including invited speakers, orals selected from abstracts, prizes

- 4. Improving diversity of AVS**
 - a. Ensure conference venue has disability access to all areas.
 - b. Transgender appropriate toilets
 - c. Gender neutral policies and inclusion of disability provisions in policies
 - d. Recording of keynote presentations/plenaries for remote viewing via a secure link to registered users

- e. Compulsory UCB training/awareness for all committee members
- f. Zoom presentations for people to provide oral presentations who cannot attend in person

5. Communication of initiatives to support gender equity and diversity to increase engagement/registration of parents, carer-givers and people living with a disability at AVS conferences.

- a. Increase awareness of gender equity policy, family-friendly events and conference policies
 - i. At meeting announcements/save the date
 - ii. At open for abstract submission announcement
 - iii. At registration
 - iv. As a flyer to be included in satchel
 - v. Through EDMs
- b. Use of twitter account to promote gender equity and diversity provisions
- c. Promotion of initiatives on AVS web page

6. Professional development

- a. Initiate a mentoring program for women and men of the AVS
- b. Provide workshops and make available presentations on grant writing, career options, leading teams, project management and other skills
- c. Increase awareness of programs to develop leadership and management skills
 - i. On website
 - ii. Through twitter
 - iii. EDMs
 - iv. At meetings

7. Ensuring social and formal events uphold the principles of gender equity and diversity.

- a. The LOC shall select entertainment that does not discriminate against any person on the basis of gender, race, religious beliefs, ethnicity, or cultural background
- b. If required, the LOC shall consult appropriate representative groups to receive guidance on selection of appropriate entertainment
- c. Announce an appropriate message to country at the start and end of all meetings