



# SOCIETIES CONSORTIUM

## ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN STEMM

An initiative to advance *professional and ethical conduct, climate & culture*

### FAQs May 2019

#### 1. What issues precipitated creation of the Societies Consortium?

- In 2016, AAAS and AGU assembled a large number of scientific society leaders and academic reps, to examine the *issues of harassment in the sciences and the role of societies to help address these issues.*
- The National Academies June 2018 Consensus Study Report on sexual harassment in Science, Engineering and Medicine (Academies Report) reveals that *there is a substantial issue of ethics, equity, diversity, and inclusion associated with pervasive gender harassment* (sexism, humiliation, denigration of women and others on the basis of gender) — often *reflecting intersectionality with* harassment based on *race and ethnicity* — and, to a lesser extent, more traditional conceptions of sex-based hostile environment (unwanted sexual attention) and quid pro quo sexual harassment (sexual coercion) and sexual assault, permeating academic science, engineering and medicine.
- Gender harassment, which is most prevalent, and other sexual harassment, do real harm to individuals and STEMM fields, *posing barriers to inclusion of all talent, causing many women (and some others) to leave the fields, and undermining excellence.*
- The Academies Report finds that *organizational climates and culture that correlate with higher rates of sexual harassment* are those *perceived as tolerant of sexual harassment* and often:
  - Are male dominated;
  - Lack civility and respect; and
  - Concentrate power in a few individuals.

- The ***Academies Report recommends*** that STEMM organizations:
  - Implement diverse, inclusive and respectful environments;
  - Diffuse power structures;
  - Improve transparency and accountability;
  - Develop support systems for targets of harassment;
  - Ensure diverse and accountable leadership.
- There has been ***little systemic progress in operationalizing needed changes*** in conduct, climate and culture.
- ***Legal liability-focused strategies have proven insufficient*** (even though legal requirements need to be addressed).

## 2. What role do societies have on the issue?

- The ***mission and role of societies is to set standards of excellence*** in STEMM fields.
- Society members—faculty, researchers and students—must be **agents of change** but they need support and positive motivation to promote change. They care about being recognized for excellence in their fields and associated **societies, meaning societies are very influential.**
- Societies have an ability—that other institutions do not have—to both serve as:
  - ***Standard bearers*** — modeling good conduct in their own operations, as well as;
  - ***Standard setters*** — for STEMM fields, including societies, academic and research institutions, hospitals, faculty, students—as employers, researchers, educators, employees and learners.

## 3. Why has the Societies Consortium been created?

- The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), the American Geophysical Union (AGU), and the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), working as sponsoring societies with EducationCounsel (“EC”) as a law and policy expert, **originated the Societies Consortium to focus on advancing professional and ethical conduct, climate, and culture in STEMM.**
- As of April 1st, 2019 **100 societies have joined** as inaugural members, leading the Consortium’s launch and creating a groundbreaking collective voice and action to address sexual harassment in STEMM. (A list is at the end of these FAQs.)
- Modeled on research consortia, the Societies Consortium provides a vehicle through which societies can ***effectively—and cost- and time- efficiently— operationalize*** key

recommendations of the Academies Consensus Report—and other good practices to prevent and address sexual harassment in STEMM.

- In addition, the Consortium is committed to the mid- and longer-term goals to **advance the harder work of building a community actively intolerant of sexual harassment, and building bridges with members' home institution to advance climate and culture change.**

#### 4. What is the mission of the Consortium?

- **The Societies Consortium's Mission Statement, developed with input from many societies is "to support academic and professional disciplinary societies in fulfilling their mission-driven roles as standard bearers and standard setters for excellence in science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medical (STEMM) fields, addressing sexual harassment in all of its forms and intersectionalities."**
- Science fields covered include **natural, social and behavioral sciences**; and the **expertise and research of the social and behavioral sciences will be important to the Consortium's work.**
- Supporting principles and definitions:
  - **Sexual harassment** is a critical issue of ethics, equity, diversity, inclusion and excellence in STEMM research, education and practice. It is a **barrier to excellence that must be eliminated.**
  - **Sexual harassment**, as included in the Societies Consortium's mission is **broadly defined to include gender harassment (sexism, disrespect, and denigration on the basis of gender), quid pro quo and hostile environment sexual harassment, sexual assault, and any other discrimination on the basis of sex or gender.**
  - It is recognized that sexual harassment **intersects with racial, ethnic and other bases for harassment and discrimination, exacerbating the adverse effect** on those individuals targeted on multiple bases.
  - **The Societies Consortium will serve needs of societies' internal operations, as well as STEMM fields** (including societies, educational and research institutions and organizations, teaching hospitals, faculty, staff and students, as employers, researchers, educators, employees and learners).
  - **A unique aspect of the Societies Consortium is the power of its collective voice and its ability to be the seed of a growing community that is actively intolerant of sexual harassment and its intersecting bases.**
  - **Through a collective endeavor, the Societies Consortium will achieve its mission in a manner that is effective, as well as time- and cost- efficient.** The Societies Consortium also aims to **model professional and ethical conduct**, climate and culture it seeks to advance.

5. What are the benefits of membership? Is Consortium membership beneficial if a society has its own sexual harassment prevention initiative and resources?

- The Societies Consortium is a **unique collective leadership** endeavor: **creating a strong and influential, collective voice, backed by action, of a diverse and large group of committed societies** (of many sizes and areas of focus) to set standards of excellence in STEMM fields. All committed **societies' participation as leaders is critical** to advancing professional and ethical conduct, climate and culture—and excellence—in STEMM!
- **Standards of excellence encompass both the quality of scientific output AND professional and ethical conduct** because that combination has the greatest impact on the fields.
- **Deliverables** produced through the Societies Consortium's collective effort **will be significantly more effective, timely, and cost-efficient than if each society were to produce strategies and resources on its own.**
  - **Even if a society is developing some resources, Consortium resources** will reflect a national perspective and input from a wide range of organizations—they are expected to **add value to any existing resources of societies.**
- Other specific benefits include:
  - Ability to provide **input into the subject matter, prioritization, and content of deliverables;**
  - **Early access** to robust, effective resources that address sexual harassment in societies' operations and the field;
  - **Voting rights** to endorse all products with the primary purpose of **policy-setting or direction-setting for societies and STEMM fields;**
  - Receipt of **policy, court, and research updates** related to sexual harassment;
  - Invitations to meetings/calls of the Societies Consortium, providing **opportunities to actively engage with peers and experts, and facilitated opportunities to build a community driving the most challenging work of climate and culture change;**
  - **Voting rights on key changes re:** membership benefits, voting rights, or (for affected societies) increase in fees above baseline.

6. What type of deliverables will be produced by the Consortium—and when?

- The Societies Consortium, will produce resources and guidance on a **quarterly schedule** that are **highly operational — driven by ethics, equity, inclusion, diversity and excellence** in STEMM (STEM and medical fields)— while also **satisfying legal** parameters and requirements. They will address both needs of particular (though not unique) emphasis for societies and **needs of STEMM fields.**
- The 3 Key Categories of Deliverables are:

- 1<sup>st</sup>—**Flexible** (non-prescriptive) **Menus Of Options For Model Policies, Procedures and Evidence-based Evaluative Systems** — drawn from member societies, academic research, IHEs, and industry — and enhanced to be suitable for, and easily customized and adopted by, a broad range of societies, and research and higher education institutions;
  - 2<sup>nd</sup>—**Policy and Law Guidance** and related services;
  - 3<sup>rd</sup>—**Practical Implementation & Evaluative Tools** for those on the front-lines (including audience-sensitive ally and bystander support and training resources)
  - The Executive Committee has approved a **Final Work Plan for 2019**, with an aggressive agenda of **quarterly deliverables**, which was reviewed and reflects the input of members. Realization of the full plan will depend on memberships to fund the work.
  - **Copies of the 2019 Work Plan are available from the [SocietiesConsortium@educationcounsel.com](mailto:SocietiesConsortium@educationcounsel.com).**
- Already accomplished or produced are:
    - **Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting and Report on the resource needs of societies**, capturing input from **70 societies**, with demand, **perceived** impact, and feasibility ratings;
    - **Report on Potential Likely High Impact 1<sup>st</sup> Year Deliverables**, informed by research.
    - **Dec 4<sup>th</sup> Planning Convening at EducationCounsel** of a **working group of 25+ societies**, plus funding and other research and educational organizations (1) finalized principles and documents for Consortium **governance and operations**; (2) gained input on priority, **high-impact 1st year deliverables**; (3) **launched** the Consortium with **initial inaugural members**;
    - **Overview and Analysis Paper on the Current Administration's proposed regulatory changes to Title IX** relating to sexual harassment, including possible impacts;
    - **Model Honors and Awards Policy** (with embedded options).
  - Other **Work Plan** items are **underway**, including:
    - Planning for an **In-person Convening of all members in late September to focus on climate and culture change strategies, among other priorities**;
    - **Survey of Societies' Good Practices** focusing on codes of conduct and associated consequences, honors and awards, and transparency reporting of incidents and consequences/leadership engagement regarding intolerance of sexual harassment (to be shared, used later for a benchmarking tool, and used to identify models that can be further enhanced);
    - **Template for Society and IHE Annual Reporting for Transparency of Intolerance of Sexual Harassment**

**7. How does a Society become a member?**

- **The Societies Consortium is committed to a broadly inclusive membership:**
  - Any STEMM society that is **committed to the scientific method and peer review**, and any closely affiliated or supporting society (e.g., STEMM ethics), may become a member through an application process;
  - The Executive Committee will make membership effective after confirming these criteria are satisfied;
  - Initially, membership is limited to societies with a U.S. domestic home-base (although resources will address operations wherever they occur); international-based societies are anticipated to be included or affiliated once the Consortium has the capacity;
- A **Membership Form** (M-Form) is in the membership materials and should be *signed and returned to [SocietiesConsortium@educationcounsel.com](mailto:SocietiesConsortium@educationcounsel.com) to initiate membership.*
  - There is **3-year term** – but members **can cancel at the end of any year**
  - Members are asked to **recommit** at the end of the term **following the Societies Consortium’s self-study** of effectiveness and impact measured against annual objectives.

**8. How does a Society become an Inaugural Member—and what does that mean?**

- Inaugural Members are *leaders* in the creation of the Societies **Consortium** and include societies that **committed by April 1, 2019** and became members;
- Inaugural Members that *committed by January 31, 2019* and became members **were recognized as inaugural members in a media announcement** at the AAAS 2019 Annual Meeting on February 15th.

**9. What is the deadline for becoming a member?**

- There is no deadline for general membership.

**10. What does it cost to become a member?**

- The Societies Consortium will ensure that **cost is not a barrier to participation**. Accordingly, fees are determined on a **sliding-scale** basis — based on **annual revenues** (consolidated) :
  - Sponsoring Societies (AAAS, AAMC and AGU): \$15,000-\$25,000
  - All other Societies—Based on Annual Revenues (Consolidated):

<u>Annual Revenues-----</u>	<u>Fee</u>
Tier 1: >\$75M-----	\$25,000
Tier 2: >\$20M to <\$75M .....	\$10,000

Tier 3: >10M to <\$20M .....	\$7,500
Tier 4: >\$5M to <\$10M .....	\$5,000
Tier 5: >\$3M to <\$5M .....	\$2,500
Tier 6: \$1M to <\$3M .....	\$1,000
Tier 7: <\$1M.....	\$500

- Fees are due January 2<sup>nd</sup> , but may be paid in 2 installments (Jan. 2 and July 1);
- **Societies for which \$500 is not affordable, or which have budget cycle issues in year 1, should contact the Executive Committee** for assistance at [SocietiesConsortium@educationcounsel.com](mailto:SocietiesConsortium@educationcounsel.com).

**11. What does my Society do if our budget cycle for 2019 is already set?**

- The Consortium Executive Committee can make case-by-case arrangements in year 1 to address a society’s budget cycle timing needs.

**12. What do membership fees fund and who approves the budget?**

- Membership fees are used primarily to support the production of **impactful and cost- and time-efficient deliverables (resources, policy and law guidance, and tools)**, as well as the administrative costs of running the Consortium.
- The annual work plan and budget are **approved by the Executive Committee** to ensure **value** to members and **transparency**.
- The Executive Committee will reduce fee levels if the baseline fees specified is not required for a particular year, and will not raise fees above the baseline without a member vote.

**13. How is the Societies Consortium governed?**

- The Societies Consortium is governed by an **Executive Committee of 9-13 society** members.
- The Executive Committee is made up of:
  - **Standing Members** (the Sponsoring Societies that organized the Consortium and invested in its start-up—AAAS, AAMC and AGU); *and*
  - **Rotating Members** drawn from Leadership Council Societies (**which are the majority of Executive Committee members**)
- The Executive Committee has oversight responsibility for membership; ensuring member input; work plans and budgets; delivery of services; and external funding proposals, among other duties.

#### 14. What is a Sponsoring Society?

- 3 Societies — American Association for the Advancement of Science (**AAAS**); American Geophysical Union (**AGU**); and Association of American Medical Colleges (**AAMC**)
- Initiated and invested in organizing the Societies Consortium;
- Serve as Standing Members of the Executive Committee;
- Pay highest level fees.

#### 15. What is a Leadership Council Society?

- Serve in an advisory leadership role—whether or not on the Executive Committee;
- Are Rotating Members of the Executive Committee (all will have an opportunity to serve at some point—depending on the ultimate number of Leadership Council Societies);
- Pay fees according the sliding-scale for all members.

#### 16. Who currently serves as the Leadership Council?

- 7 major disciplinary societies have committed to serve as the Inaugural Leadership Council Societies; all serve on the Executive Committee as Rotating Members. They include:
  - American **Chemical** Society,
  - American **Educational Research** Association,
  - American **Psychological** Association,
  - American **Physical** Society,
  - American Society for **Cell Biology**,
  - **Entomological** Society of America
  - Institute of **Electrical and Electronics Engineers**
- Newly appointed members of the Leadership Council are:
  - American Institute of **Physics**
  - American Society for **Biochemistry and Molecular Biology**
  - American Society for **Microbiology**
  - Association of Academic **Physiatrists**
  - Federation of American Societies for **Experimental Biology**
  - **Geological** Society of America
  - The **Optical** Society



## 17. Can other societies join the Leadership Council?

- Any member society in good standing may become a Leadership Council Society by request and subsequent appointment of the Executive Committee (numbers of appointments will be kept to a functional total number).
- Leadership Council members must demonstrate:
  - Commitment to advance the mission of the Consortium;
  - Willingness to devote the necessary time to fulfill a leadership role.

## 18. What is the effect of a Federation Society becoming a member?

- Each STEMM **federation society**—i.e., a society with a substantial portion of its members being other societies—is **encouraged to join the Societies Consortium**. Two Sponsoring Societies (AAAS and AAMC) are federations; there are many different models and sizes.
- A federation society’s Societies Consortium membership will not confer Consortium membership on each of the federation’s member societies, but the **federation society may**
  - **provide** to its member societies *early access* to Consortium **resources**;
  - **seek input** from its member societies when providing input to the Consortium on resources.
- **Each of the federation’s member societies is encouraged to join the Societies Consortium**, to contribute its **own voice** and be recognized **as a leader** in the Consortium’s collective effort to set standards of excellence in STEM;
  - The Consortium will generate impactful resources benefiting members and the fields—but its **unique groundbreaking mission** is its collective service to and standard setting for STEMM fields—the **strength and credibility of the collective voice of a broad diversity and large number of societies, backed by action**.
- Some federation member societies are particularly resource constrained; but **affordability will not be a barrier to participation by any committed society**;
  - The Executive Committee can **respond to special circumstances** on a case by case basis to **ensure affordability** for all interested societies.
  - **Each society member is an equal in the Consortium**, regardless of the size of its membership, revenues, or the Consortium fee it pays.
  - With those caveats, however, **each society’s investment in membership (within its ability) is necessary to the Societies Consortium’s work**, is part of each society’s action to further the criticality of the Consortium’s mission, and is **part of assuming a leadership role** in removing barriers to full participation of all talent in STEMM fields.

## 19. Who runs the day to day operations of the Consortium?

- The Societies Consortium is not a legal entity, does not enter contracts, own intellectual property or employ staff. Consequently, the ***Sponsoring Societies and EducationCounsel*** fulfill those roles.
- **AAAS** — Serves as the fiscal, contracting agent (as the Consortium is not a contracting entity).
- **EducationCounsel** — Serves as Senior Administrators and staff, as well as law and policy experts, providing services that include:
  - ***Overall project management;***
  - Administration of the Consortium, senior staff services, and ***support to the Executive Committee and members***, as well as the Advisory Council;
  - Facilitation and materials development for meetings;
  - ***Expert guidance/services on law and policy;***
  - ***Creation of deliverables;***
  - Reports on Consortium activities.

## 20. What is the role of the Advisory Council?

- The Advisory Council will be appointed by the Executive Committee and will be made up of institutions in STEMM fields beyond Societies (IHEs, teaching hospitals, research organizations, industry);
- It will provide necessary input on the Consortium’s work to ***ensure that deliverables serve the field*** effectively.

## 21. What rights do Consortium Members receive in Consortium deliverables?

- AAAS will own—for the benefit of the Consortium—its logo and the Copyright/IP for EducationCounsel’s and any other Consortium Work Product (because the Consortium isn’t a legal entity);
- Members receive a ***royalty-free, irrevocable, world-wide, non-exclusive license, giving them the right to copy, use and prepare derivative works of Consortium Work Product for their own (and their members’) non-commercial use*** (not for charge or other consideration), within core mission to serve research and education in STEMM fields, with attribution to the Societies Consortium and EducationCounsel.
- ***To serve the field*** and society—a mission focus—a ***creative commons license*** will be provided for noncommercial use of Consortium Work Product ***after providing the deliverables to Societies Consortium members*** for a limited period determined by the Executive Committee.

- License fees will be assessed for most commercial use.

**22. How does the Societies Consortium relate to the Action Collaborative being formed by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine?**

- The National Academies Action Collaborative is a ***complementary but distinct initiative*** from the Societies Consortium; the two are ***not mutually exclusive***;
- The members of the ***Action Collaborative*** are institutions and organizations of ***higher education***; the members of the ***Societies Consortium*** are academic and professional ***disciplinary societies***, many of whose members are employed by or studying at institutions of higher education and research.
- The ***Action Collaborative and Societies Consortium are engaging*** and sharing information to avoid unnecessary duplication and ***enhance the success of both initiatives*** to advance prevention and response to sexual harassment.
- A ***potential deliverable of the Societies Consortium is a model strategy***, vetted with IHEs (e.g., feasible MOA form) ***to build bridges with home institutions of society members for information sharing and incident handling***. We will seek input from the Action Collaborative, among other stakeholders.

-----

For a comprehensive list of the Societies Consortium membership, including the 100 Inaugural Members, please click [here](#).