

Five Ways to Support the Workplace Equity Project: A Community-wide Call to Participation



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By now, thanks to ISMTE's endorsement of the Workplace Equity (WE) Project's survey initiative, most readers are aware of the Project and its current primary call to action—a survey of industry professionals. The Project is complementary to the Diversity Initiative from the Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP), now in its formative stages, which will address workplace equity at the organizational level. Aside from the knee-jerk reaction to these initiatives, which for me is deep gratitude that the organizations and individuals within our space are forward thinking, egalitarian, and have a bias for action, we *all* can do something to keep these important efforts on track, moving forward.

1. Thank Yourself for Taking the Survey

If you don't share your experiences and perspectives, the dataset will not be complete. The survey is anonymous, and responses contribute toward a positive, shared goal: increasing workplace equity!

“Completing the Workplace Equity Project's survey was a fast and easy way to contribute to WE's mission,” explains Michael Di Natale, Technology Product Manager at BioOne. “I'd hope many of my colleagues in the scholarly publishing community would take the time to complete the survey so that WE is able to gather a robust set of data from which to set goals and objectives which will help build a stronger and better industry.”

2. Spread the Word

Share the initiative with your peers, mentees, and employees. This truly grassroots effort depends on your leadership! Using personal and, if possible, organizational social media accounts to share the message is another simple but powerful means of supporting WE.

“As Barack Obama said, ‘Change won't come from the top; change will come from mobilized grassroots,’” notes Susan Spilka, WE co-founder and head of marketing and communications. “In the past couple of years, there's been increasing pressure from within the scholarly publishing community for our organizations to embrace diversity and inclusion and achieve equity in our workplaces. WE intends to accelerate the pace of that change.”

3. Volunteer!

If you have time and talent to spare (I'm certain of the latter), join the effort directly through volunteer work. Differing from other industry initiatives, WE currently is fully volunteer run and has no sponsors. Your support is crucial to WE's success.

“I met Susan Spilka at an AAP talk in the fall of 2017, and she mentioned she was working on an industry survey and hoped I would take the survey when released because she wanted to make sure feedback was being given by all genders, and it seemed difficult to get men to participate,” recalls Matthew Zimmerman, Online Platform Manager at Springer Publishing

Company. “That meeting turned into a phone call, where I said I would be happy to help out beyond just taking the survey. Since I work in digital product management, I deployed my skills and expertise toward the WE website and survey.

“I have worked in publishing for six years, and it was obvious from the beginning that even though the overwhelming majority of my coworkers were women, most of the ‘C-suite’ positions were held by men (and usually white men). I think it is important to work on this survey, so we can put some hard numbers next to what I think is obvious to everyone already at an impressionistic level.”

4. BE More WE

The best way to move ahead is just to take the first steps, right? In our own professional communities, we can be the change we want to see. Keeping diversity and inclusiveness in mind when making hiring and other policy decisions is a great way to cultivate positive change.

“We live in a deeply connected and international world,” observes Jeri Wachter, WE co-founder and head of Alliances. “We know intuitively that gender and ethnic diversity matters. WE aims to advance the dialogue through research and advocacy, to help professional and scholarly publishers do more to take advantage of the opportunity that a diverse team represents.”

5. Seek Your Own Level

Align yourself with mentors, such as those working to move WE forward, who share your passion for these efforts. Attend and participate in sessions on diversity and inclusiveness at industry meetings.

I certainly put “Five Ways” in the title, but...

6. Let's Keep Going!

These can be tricky topics. However, as any useful yoga practice will teach, it's the discomfort that we must push through to make meaningful progress. Especially in an industry full of supportive organizations, positive leaders, and forward-thinking peers, even when it's challenging, we can stand strong, use the community, and look to the brighter, more inclusive future WE are building for inspiration.

“The World Economic Forum's Gender Gap Index predicts that at the current rate, across the 106 countries surveyed since records began in 2006, the global gender gap in economic participation and opportunity can be closed in 217 years,” notes Simone Taylor, WE co-founder and head of operations. “Should we really wait that long to achieve parity? Join the Workplace Equity project and contribute to a discourse that will attract and maintain an industry workforce that better reflects the diversity (gender, race, creed, sexual orientation, disability, geographical location) of the general population. Let's close that gap more quickly.”

Okay, and one more...

7. Stay Tuned

Beginning when the survey closed on March 23, the WE Review Board began analyzing the results and will share them with the community, and will also do so during a session at SSP's Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois (May 30 – June 1). I hope to see you there!

Here you have them: *Seven* things that you can do to advance the industry through support for WE. I'm sure there are more. Please feel free to tweet your ideas to @WESurvey! I can confidently say, when it comes to diversity and inclusiveness, if we work together, *WE've got this!*

Ira Salkin Scholarship

The application process is open for the 2018 International Society of Managing and Technical Editors Ira Salkin Scholarship. Ira was one of the founding fathers of ISMTE and sadly passed away in 2016. His goal was to ensure editorial office professionals are educated and vigilant in matters of publishing ethics.

The essay topic for 2018 is “The ethical way forward of dealing with predatory journals.”

The submission deadline for entries is **31 May, 2018**.

Eligible applicants must be members of ISMTE.

Applicants must include a short cover letter stating their position and some background.

Read the official Rules and Regulations [here](#).

We are looking forward to receiving your entries for the 2018 Ira Salkin Scholarship.

