



External Affairs DEI Steering Committee

November 4, 2022

Year-end Report to Steve Burgay, senior VP, External Affairs

# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	2
Glossary	2
<b>Section I: How We Prepared Ourselves</b>	2
<b>Section II: Summary of Committee Activities</b>	4
<b>Section III: Our Findings</b>	6
<b>Section IV: Action Items</b>	10
<b>Section V: Our Recommendations</b>	11
<b>Appendix A</b>	15
<b>Appendix B</b>	21



## Executive Summary

In its first year, the External Affairs DEI Steering Committee has held training for all staff, rolled out working agreements, built relationships with HR and other leaders across campus, held hiring and retention listening sessions, launched a staff DEI newsletter, established a learning and development subcommittee, and met with many staff on a one-to-one basis to hear their feedback, ideas, and concerns. We've also advised senior leadership, meetings in which we talked about committee priorities, shared best practices, and aired areas of concern, such as transparent communication and work-from-home equity. There have been difficult moments—a planned department-wide survey was shelved and some committee members had to step back—but it's been a year of great progress.

## Glossary

D&I = Diversity & Inclusion

DEI = diversity, equity, and inclusion

EA = External Affairs

VP = vice president

WFH = work from home

## Section I: How We Prepared Ourselves

The External Affairs DEI Steering Committee held its first meeting in mid-November 2021. Prior to that, the co-leads, Sharon Freeman and Andrew Thurston, visited all teams in External Affairs in order to recruit a committee that represented diverse identities, backgrounds, positions, and experiences from across EA. The committee was established with sixteen members that included representation from throughout this community.

Because of the holiday season, we met only four times in 2021. During that time, we introduced a working agreement and had discussions about what the agreement meant, and how we would use the agreement in our committee. We made modifications to the agreement and invited Kristen Handricken, the Diversity & Inclusion director of learning and training, to help facilitate the process. We established weekly time for group icebreakers and watched a short video, called ["Why Gender Pronouns Matter"](#). We discussed gender identity, the use of pronouns, and



what they mean to us as individuals and to our committee's work; and most importantly, we were on a path to learning, trust building, relationship building, and growth during those four weeks.

We kicked off the new year by asking, "Why are we here?" Committee members shared their personal reasons for joining the committee, which helped build cohesion and understanding of one another. We began to make connections and explored our differences. The committee had tough conversations that were intense and emotional at times. Some conversations were uncomfortable yet critical for the work that we were about to embark upon. Some members felt a little nervous about the magnitude of the work and the level of responsibility, and some were discouraged and frustrated with the pace. The path seemed unclear to some, but Sharon Freeman, one of the committee co-leads, assured the team that we were on pace and that the difficult conversations are part of the work. Kristen Handricken facilitated some meetings and affirmed pace, learning, and the use of our working agreement.

We had productive sessions around hiring and retention, and the committee solidified its focus on hiring and retention, and later added culture to the focus. We continued our learning by reading articles on "White Institutional Norms" and exploring BU Diversity & Inclusion's [Living Language Guide](#) in order to understand diversity and inclusion-related terms, which is critical to the work. Andrew Thurston stepped down from his co-lead role due to a promotion, and we seamlessly transitioned to our new co-lead, Carol Duan.

The makeup of the committee shifted over time, with the retirement of one member and the loss of several others, who needed to step back because of workload or personal reasons; the former will be addressed later in the report. We recruited new members for next year by hosting two information sessions and personal outreach by current committee members.

Committee co-leads held monthly meetings with our senior VP, Steve Burgay, in which we established open lines of communication and shared our learning, trust-building, growth, and our goals, challenges, and committee activities. Co-leads had the balance of receiving advice, support, and guidance on University-wide resources, and the autonomy of leading the committee and framing our own learning path and focus.



## Section II: Summary of Committee Activities

The committee addressed the option of a five-day work-from-home benefit that was offered to the Interactive Design team in 2022. Committee members had varying opinions about the benefit made available to ID, and the topic took precedence over our focus on hiring, retention, and culture and rolling out working agreements to teams across External Affairs. We invited our senior VP, Steve Burgay, to talk about the business decision; we then wrote a letter addressing our concerns that there was an inequity created by the benefit, and that there was a lack of transparency around communicating the decision.

Before moving forward with hiring and retention as a focus, the committee created a climate/culture survey to gauge existing diversity represented in External Affairs, and to assess current culture. The goal was to use the data to assess the diversity landscape and to offer recommendations on how to build inclusion and belonging in the department. Meredith Mann took the lead on creating the survey in Qualtrics with help and suggestions from the rest of the committee. Committee members used multiple survey resources and collaborated with Kristen Handricken, Thiago Abreu, and Linette Decarie, assistant VP of Analytical Services & Institutional Research, to draft the survey. There was a demographic section and an assessment section asking how employees felt External Affairs rated on diversity, equity, inclusion, and workplace culture. Once the survey was completed, the plan was to release assessments of the survey results and what those results meant to our External Affairs departments. We were advised to share the survey with our Human Resources business partners to assess the legality of specific questions. The survey was reviewed by HR and Karin Firoza, associate provost ad interim for Community & Inclusion, and ultimately placed on hold due to the larger survey that will be offered by the University in winter 2023. We were reassured that subset data for External Affairs will be shared once winter 2023 data is analyzed. This was considered a setback by most committee members, but we regrouped, and our survey plan was transitioned into listening sessions for hiring managers to discuss the resources, support, and challenges that they face around recruiting and hiring diverse candidates. This transition speaks to the evolving nature of DEI work but also to the collective will and creativity of this particular group to find opportunities from struggle.



The DEI committee set goals and planned several initiatives. Below is a list of the work that was completed by the committee over the last nine months:

- **Building the muscle for a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace**
  - Held diversity, equity, and inclusion training for all staff in the fall of 2021 and for inclusive managers in spring 2022
  - Rolled out working agreements to all teams across EA in spring 2022
  - Created visual tools to help facilitate the working agreements
  - Spent time fortifying the committee, building trust and relationships
- **Created a collaboration framework to evaluate institutional resources and navigate through a reorganization within BU D&I**
  - Met with Amanda Bailey, VP of Human Resources, and Karin Firoza, associate VP ad interim of Community & Inclusion, to discuss the University's plan and actions on diversity, equity, and inclusion and to assess the resources of those stakeholders in order to leverage them for EA
  - Met with Anita Stasiowski, associate VP of Finance & Administration, in order to understand the hiring process and the collaboration with Talent Acquisition, hiring managers, and Compensation
  - Met with DEI committee leads across the University in order to build relationships, collaborate, and share ideas
- **Held three listening sessions for hiring managers in summer 2022**
  - *See Appendix A for the in-depth report on these listening sessions*
- **Established frequent communication with EA employees to share DEI updates**
  - Sent out four newsletters to share announcements, progress, and resources
  - Utilized MailChimp to track newsletter performance
  - Set up a team inbox [eadei@bu.edu](mailto:eadei@bu.edu) for internal collaboration and community feedback
  - Designed the [EA DEI website](#), which will be launched this fall
- **Hosted team-building activities within the committee to boost morale and increase engagement**



## Section III: Our Findings

### **Mandatory DEI training is good, but structural DEI efforts are better.**

The mandatory DEI training we launched for hiring managers and all staff in External Affairs helped us develop a basic understanding of what diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) means for a workplace and why it matters. We sent out surveys after these training sessions to gather feedback. Based on the survey results, lots of EA staff found it helpful and worthwhile. The meaningful conversations we had at these training sessions have prompted individuals to reach out for more resources and tools to incorporate DEI into their everyday operations. Anecdotally, we heard folks, both from within leadership and in nonmanagerial roles, raising questions and concerns around diverse hiring, equitable access to career opportunities and benefits, handling pushback and microaggressions, and transparent decision-making processes. We learned that folks expect to see more structural DEI efforts, from a comprehensive employee support program to initiatives promoting cultural competence to metrics that measure EA's commitment to DEI. Hiring managers also hope to get more support and guidance from HR and BU D&I to improve recruiting diverse candidates. All of these require continued support from the senior leadership, increased investment in the infrastructure to support ongoing DEI efforts, and expanded collaborations with fellow DEI experts and key stakeholders on campus.

### **Employees expect to see tangible and measurable progress. To achieve this goal, we need to advance DEI through data.**

Through individual conversations and team discussions, we noticed the increasing demands for measurable DEI initiatives and data transparency within External Affairs. We decided to take a data-driven approach to understand our current diversity and workplace culture. However, our attempt to launch an internal climate/culture survey had led us to a dilemma: the urgency of examining EA's current DEI landscape versus the lack of available subset of EA data from the existing University-wide DEI survey. Connecting with multiple key stakeholders, including Linette Decarie, assistant VP of Analytical Services & Institutional Research, Karin Firoza, BU's Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) associate provost ad interim for Community & Inclusion, and Amanda Bailey, VP for Human Resources, was helpful for the committee to understand major concerns over data privacy, survey effectiveness, and survey fatigue. Facing these data collection challenges, the committee has been continuing to look for alternative ways to gauge the existing DEI in External Affairs.



**The hiring process doesn't have consistent guidelines or expectations. This puts an additional burden on hiring managers and creates an inconsistent experience for candidates.**

A question raised at one of our listening sessions that resonated strongly with the attendees was "How do we define diversity?" Hiring managers need more understanding of the department's commitment to diversity and what fulfilling that means. They also mentioned the lack of guidance on building talented, diverse teams, particularly on how to attract, recruit, and retain candidates from diverse backgrounds. Hiring managers expect to get more resources to help them understand what they can do to reduce profiling candidates and to unlearn implicit biases. Some hiring managers feel restricted because they don't have the systems in place to train those who might be slightly underqualified. Based on the feedback, the committee members feel it's important to create initiatives to support hiring managers, like implementing hiring panels. We also need to clarify and agree on a definition of diversity and what specifically we want to improve on in our department to help with recruiting and parsing candidates. When we try to define what diversity means to us, we need to recognize the diversity already here and acknowledge who's missing on the team. This helps each team to define what kind of diversity they are looking for. For example, if it's a more male-dominated team, think about gender diversity when posting job listings.

**Managers struggle with not receiving a diverse applicant pool. As a department, we should continue to work on improving our job listings.**

At the listening sessions, hiring managers shared the challenges they encountered around building a diverse candidate pool. Many times, the résumés hiring managers received did not reflect much depth of diversity. The current diverse job boards used by some teams haven't brought major changes in the applicant pool. For some hiring managers, posting through HR was the only job-posting option they used for hiring. Under the current standardized hiring process, the applications reviewed and selected by HR can often be offtrack for the type of candidate the manager may be looking for. Some managers choose to have HR not sort their Silk Road applications. Despite extra screening work on the manager's end, it allows for more specific sorting of résumés that HR might miss or ignore with their system. For some teams, given their job functions, hiring managers sometimes feel constrained by the candidates who



make it through all the qualification tests. All in all, resources are needed to improve the reach of our job listings.

### **Some teams have been struggling with retention, which has a negative impact on recruitment.**

Some hiring managers mentioned at the listening sessions that they've been struggling with retention and find it becoming a factor when trying to find candidates. As people with agency experience are preferred for in-house positions, the pay gaps specific to External Affairs are often compared to the in-house agency model. A strategic approach to highlight the benefits of working at BU and a re-evaluation of EA's compensation plan may help hiring managers improve recruitment and retention.

### **There's a lack of trust between employees and HR.**

Based on our conversations with colleagues within the department, we noticed a lack of trust between employees and HR resulting from hiring efficiency and organizational bureaucracy. Additionally, there's an impression that HR and senior leadership are not there to support employees during conflicts with management. Folks highlighted the need for a safe and welcoming place where conflict resolution and potential issues around diversity, equity, and inclusion can be flagged and handled in a respectful, timely, and confidential manner.

### **Transparency and openness help promote a culture of allyship.**

One of the frequently asked questions the committee received at working agreements rollout meetings was about transparent decision-making. We heard from managers and nonmanagerial staff voicing their support and concerns on this matter. This topic later became a focal point of the committee discussion as members found out how the WFH policy offered to Interactive Design was communicated within External Affairs. The way Steve Burgay, the senior VP of External Affairs, addressed the committee's concerns around the WFH policy was a great example of how transparency and openness foster a culture of allyship. It not only offered a chance for both sides to share their perspectives, but more importantly, brought a sense of trust built up between staff and the leadership. This was a learning moment for all of us on how to facilitate and embrace an honest conversation.





## **Timely communication and community-building events are essential to maintain the momentum of our DEI efforts.**

Based on anecdotal feedback, event attendance, and open rates of the committee's newsletters, we were glad to see folks at EA showing continued interest in DEI updates. Elevating the voices of committee members and highlighting our collective learning experiences around issues of DEI have been resonating well with our colleagues. Members of the committee agreed that establishing effective two-way communication is crucial to maintain the momentum of our DEI efforts. There's also a rising need for more community-building initiatives, both within and outside of the committee, to encourage brave and open workplace conversations.

## **Learning, engagement, and development help build a community.**

The committee felt it was important to establish recurring learning and development around diversity, equity, and inclusion, and to further promote and create opportunities around engagement and growth within our EA community. A subcommittee on learning, engagement, and development was established in early summer, and we're hoping to launch this important initiative in the next year by offering more specialized learning and training, listening sessions, inviting scholarly guests, and further leveraging existing resources within the University. It is our hope that these efforts, coupled with our critical goals of hiring a more diverse workforce, will promote further growth and catalyze change across EA.

## **We need to invest in a sustainable DEI strategy to support the committee in fulfilling its purpose.**

As you can see from **Section I: How We Prepared Ourselves**, our tasked mission required a fair amount of time for collective learning (and unlearning), group discussions, trust building, and tremendous courage to share our traumas and lived experiences in a way that was new to all of us. Our work also came with unexpected roadblocks that were emotionally draining and resulted in extra workload. But these pain points were necessary to slowly build the foundation that moves us toward systematic change. The work impacted us volunteers by its toll, but it impacted our community by the showing of interest and engagement, the open rate of newsletters, helping us define our focus, and aligning with the University's strategic priorities. The overall impact is demonstrated by the work outlined in this report, and serves as an opportunity to re-evaluate whether volunteers should be the sole resource that defines, leads, and executes the efforts of an important initiative such as diversity, equity, and inclusion. It's



important to point out that all members contribute to this high-value work, and that committee co-leads carry the majority of the weight as they are tasked to lead, build morale, strategize, plan, communicate, organize, and collaborate with resources across the University. This should be considered as we create our long-term plan for DEI and our recommendation of investing in a full-time resource that supports this strategic priority and the advancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion in External Affairs.

## **Section IV: Action Items**

**The committee can continue with the recurring Learning, Engagement, and Development (LED) Initiative.**

**EA can reinforce the use of [working agreements](#).**

The agreements were rolled out in the spring, but teams haven't completely built muscle around using them. The committee is a good model to use for assessing the use of agreements and how to fortify teams, build trust, and develop the characteristics that ultimately build community and inclusion in the workplace. We'd like to revisit the agreements with EA leadership next year and hope to solidify the use of the agreements as we look to grow in our workplace.

**We can continue to build meaningful collaborations across and beyond campus.**

Building relationships is very important, as they can build bridges and create opportunities for diverse voices to break into our various fields of work. Aside from meeting monthly with Senior VP Steve Burgay, setting up regular check-in meetings with Anita Stasiowski, Amanda Bailey, Francie Latour, and other DEI leads on campus may help the committee break down silos and gather more resources. While we appreciate recommendations from people within the BU community, we also caution on the closed systems and inequities they may perpetuate when looking to create a more diverse and inclusive department. Considering this, it may be important for the DEI committee to expand collaborations and resources beyond the University as we move forward.

**EA can continue to improve our job listings to attract talent with diverse backgrounds.**



Knowing the language we use in recruitment material significantly affects the University's appeal to applicants, a couple of committee members, especially Gemma Acheampong, have been helping teams review job descriptions to incorporate language that speaks to a more diverse pool. This should continue to be an area of focus in the DEI work.

As HR continues to explore tools for inclusive job posting language, we suggest continued check-ins with Anita and HR in order to learn and understand whether new resources and tools are effective and find ways that we can broadly share those resources with our hiring managers. We hope to have measurable improvement in this area by spring 2023.

### **EA can create and grow a standardized list of diverse job posting sites.**

As we continue to leverage partnerships and collaborate with HR to expand our talent search pool, we recommend creating and storing a list of diverse job posting sites on the internal DEI website in the interim. We should organize those postings sites into groups (such as General, Web Design, Print Design, Project Management, etc.) for teams to update the list and benefit centrally.

### **EA can use a centralized fund center for job postings that create diverse hiring.**

Based on our findings from the listening sessions, part of the issue of diversifying job boards for hiring managers is also about how much it may cost and who's paying for it. Thus, we suggest establishing a centralized fund center that emphasizes EA's commitment to diversity and inclusion in hiring.

## **Section V: Our Recommendations**

### **We recommend creating a long-term plan to incorporate DEI values into our operations.**

We suggest developing a five-year strategic plan to map our way to a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace. This long-term plan would serve as a guidance for the leadership and the DEI committee as we make short-term plans and implement DEI initiatives. This long-term plan would provide the context of every DEI initiative (e.g., building a more inclusive shared language), the initiative's goals (e.g., fewer incidents of microaggressions and disrespectful language), and expectations for accountability (e.g., building a workforce that reflects the



diversity of the people we serve). We should highlight primarily the support available to all (learning resources and leadership coaching), while underscoring the importance of achieving the initiative's goals within the expected timeline.

### **We recommend taking a data-driven approach to assess the current workplace diversity and culture.**

We suggest hosting more listening sessions in order to continue assessing the current environment. We also recommend working with key stakeholders, including HR and Analytical Services & Institutional Research, to track and improve our DEI hiring metrics.\* We hope to do this through expanding hiring platforms and channels; developing strategies that support DEI, such as learning and education around why diversity is critical; and building a more inclusive work culture that attracts and retains diverse talent.

Responding to rising demands for DEI data transparency, we also suggest using the internal DEI website to create a repository of benchmarking metrics/data, annual DEI reports, and DEI resources, where EA staff can learn about existing diversity and track the DEI progress within our department.

*\*Please refer to the [current dashboard](#) put up by Analytical Services & Institutional Research to look at the University's overall staff diversity and see Appendix B for External Affairs's diversity counts.*

### **We recommend a new position dedicated to diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

The University's [Strategic Plan](#) identifies diversity, equity, and inclusion as a priority, and there are several resources across the University that are dedicated to this priority. However, we find that navigating the vast amount of resources across the University is exhaustive and confusing, and might be better served if we had a dedicated person to build those bridges, build cadence with the leadership team, and support DEI efforts in External Affairs. In order to advance DEI goals and initiatives in External Affairs, we recommend further investment by funding a full-time position dedicated to executing some of the recommendations laid out above and working alongside the DEI committee in order to help implement the goals and initiatives of the committee and our leadership. The DEI position would be a resource for managers and staff, provide the resource of dedicated time that's needed in order to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in External Affairs, work alongside the DEI committee, and provide the support and



resources that are needed in order to achieve our commitment to diversity in hiring and the retention of those staff once they're here.

**We recommend implementing the Growth in Leadership Initiative to lean forward into leadership growth, starting with the senior leadership team.**

External Affairs does many things well, and there are a number of talented, award-winning teams with individuals who produce top-rated work that is recognized by peers both regionally and nationally. This work couldn't be done without the support and leadership of Steve Burgay and the leadership team. We do, however, wish to point out that as diversity and inclusion becomes more defined as a priority for the University, we should find ways to align with those priorities by providing learning and education for our leadership team that will further grow those individuals and serve as a foundation to build team morale, eliminate microaggressions, and create a place where people feel joy and pride—not necessarily with the finished work product, because that already exists, but while completing the work. We recommend tools such as 1:1 coaching, leadership awareness, [360 evaluations](#), and education and awareness around microaggressions, biases, power and positionality, and management styles that are unintentionally modeled after "[white institutional norms](#)." We believe that as our leadership team grows in its learning and development, it creates a model and blueprint for systemic change within our organization.

**We recommend creating a buddy system to help new hires orient.**

At the listening sessions, hiring managers mentioned the need for better retention for new candidates. To address this concern and further build a welcoming work environment, we recommend creating a mentorship program to provide better grounding for new employees and help them learn and grow faster in the EA community. We also recommend an EA-wide Slack channel for new employees to chat, ask questions, and create friendships considering our hybrid working model.

**We recommend embedding inclusivity for all within the employee journey.**

The employee experience is built around assumptions about the "ideal" employee that no longer hold true for our current workforce, which, among other things, is more disabled, neurodivergent, and culture-based than the workforce of the past. We recommend revisiting employee onboarding, job design, and the manager-direct report experience to be more



accessible, then integrate these changes into general management training and the Growth in Leadership Initiative mentioned above, which includes 1:1 coaching and learning around biases, microaggressions, and power and positionality.

**We recommend considering ways to create more pipelines for employees and/or students to contribute diverse perspectives and possibly grow into future candidates.**

Examples of this include creating internships, workshops, or mentorships to support professionals and student workers to gain personal and professional growth within the department.

**We recommend inserting a conflict-of-interest disclosure process before candidates are offered a job.**

Conflict-of-interest disclosure would bring transparency on prior relationships and possible conflicts of interest before a job offer takes place. A hiring manager would disclose whether there was a familial relationship with the candidate or if the person is a known acquaintance, which might skew the hiring and salary negotiation process, and also helps by bringing transparency where previous relationships exist. This process is probably best served by HR but we could consider inserting this step or working with HR and General Counsel around the feasibility of this.

**We recommend developing initiatives to allow employees to strengthen ties to the community and cultivate a developmental network.**

We'd like to propose a service initiative that allows employees to volunteer for community service of their choice for one to two full days per year. We could also create a pipeline to the community by using our talents to teach disciplines in interactive design and web content production with the goal of a paid summer internship or job offer/mentorship. These position types are the hardest to fill, so we could focus on these disciplines or expand to science writing (*The Brink*), photography, data analytics, finance and budgeting, and social media. We should work with Government and Community Affairs to identify the communities that would benefit from this service or whether we can expand on similar initiatives that already exist.



## Appendix A

### Hiring Manager Listening Session Summary

After conducting three listening sessions with hiring managers in External Affairs on what needs to be addressed regarding hiring and retention in our department, we compiled a list of questions and concerns that need to be answered, as well as recommendations on how they can be answered and addressed.

#### Questions To Answer:

- How do we define diversity? How do we balance diversity of thought, gender, race, ethnicity, etc.? Hiring managers need more understanding of the department's commitment to diversity and what fulfilling that means.
- Is there any guidance on how to balance need/desire to fill positions with more diverse candidates with ability to do the job?
- How do we reach people who need minimal training? How can I reach a diverse candidate pool having that constraint?
- How do we widen opportunities for candidates given that some candidates have socioeconomic advantages vs. others?
  - It's a fallacy that diverse candidates are less qualified (so the idea of needing to find a "balance" should be clarified on). The focus should instead be on bringing in more diverse, qualified applicants.
- Are managers expected to post every single job through diversity job boards? Are there other ways to increase the diverse applicant pool?
- Is there a way to get data on which job sites have more traffic vs. others?



- What can managers do to reduce profiling candidates? How can they work on their implicit biases?

### **Problems to Address:**

- Managers struggle with not receiving a diverse applicant pool. Many times, the résumés received do not reflect much depth of diversity.
- Several jobs are posted on diverse job boards but the positions have remained open for over a year.
- For some managers, the only job posting option used is through HR, and that's the only traffic it gets.
- HR chooses to review submissions and sends them selectively. They can often be offtrack for who the manager may be looking for.
- Resources are needed to post job positions in different places.
- For some teams, the job function is similar to a craft or trade. They administer tests and can sometimes feel constrained by the candidates who make it through.
- Some hiring managers feel restricted because they don't have the systems in place to train those who might be slightly underqualified.
- Some hiring managers struggle with retention and find it becomes a factor when trying to find candidates.

### **Recommendations/Action Items:**





The hiring process doesn't have consistent guidelines or expectations. This puts additional burden on hiring managers and creates an inconsistent experience for candidates.

**To address this:**

- We should create initiatives to support hiring managers, like implementing hiring panels.
- We need to clarify and agree on a definition of diversity and what specifically we want to improve on in our department to help with recruiting and parsing candidates.
  - When we try to define what diversity means to us, we need to recognize the diversity already there and acknowledge who's missing on your team. This helps each team to define what kind of diversity you are looking for.
    - For example, if it's a more male-dominated team, think about gender diversity when posting job listings.
- We should come together to agree on how to make decisions fairly based on résumés and interviews.
- We should communicate within the context of every DEI initiative (e.g., building a more inclusive shared language), the initiative's goals (e.g., fewer incidents of microaggressions and disrespectful language), and expectations for accountability (e.g., by the time of the next yearly survey, an improved belonging score).
  - We should highlight primarily the support available to all (learning resources and leadership coaching), while underscoring the importance of achieving the initiative's goals within the expected timeline.



Managers struggle with not receiving a diverse applicant pool. Jobs are often posted on diverse job boards with minimal results or changes in the applicant pool.

**To address this:**

- Creating and growing a standardized list of diverse boards and sites to post the open positions would be helpful for hiring managers.
  - Decide as a department where the responsibility for these job listings lie. (Is it with the individual manager? With the department as a whole? With HR?)
    - For example, if we have to put these postings on a PCard then that means it falls on the person with the PCard.
  - In the interim, we can store that list on the Marcom Team site or the DEI site, in a Hiring/For Managers section. We can organize the postings sites into groups like General, Web Design, Print Design, Project Management, Development, Writing, etc. so everyone can update that page and benefit centrally
- Some managers have chosen to have HR not sort their Silk Road applications. While this is more work to sort on the manager's end, it allows for more specific sorting of résumés that HR might miss or ignore with their system. If a manager feels they have the bandwidth to do the extra sorting, it's recommended they take that extra step.
- It's great to get recommendations from people within the BU community, but we caution on the closed systems and inequities they may create when looking to create a more diverse and inclusive department.



- Consider ways to create more pipelines for younger employees and/or students to contribute diverse perspectives and possibly grow into future candidates. Examples of this include internships, workshops, mentorships, etc.

As a department, we should continue to work on improving our job listings.

**To address this:**

- We should continually work to remove bias from our posting language and job descriptions to attract a more diverse pool.
- We need a list from HR of exactly what can and can't be said legally in job descriptions to encourage diverse candidates to apply.
- It may also help to develop an internal list of best practices for composing job postings and conducting interviews. This list doesn't need to be exhaustive—anything would be a step in the right direction and get everyone aligned.
- Evaluating must-need vs. nice-to-have hard and soft skills is essential for the job descriptions. This also helps with using the most relevant keywords to make sure HR has a better idea of which applicants/résumés to send forward.

We need to network more. There needs to be outreach in targeted community groups online and in-person, like job fairs or with freelance groups.

**To address this:**

- Building relationships is very important, as they can build bridges and create opportunities for diverse voices to break into our various fields of work.



We need to consider the payscale we are competing with when looking for candidates.

**To address this:**

- Consider the industry standards.
- Consider how we can push and talk about the benefits of working at BU and our department to make up for any difference in the industry.
- Consider an internal pay equity review with HR Comp to address race and gender pay gaps.
- Consider the pay gap specific to External Affairs compared to the in-house agency model, as people with agency experience are preferred for in-house positions.

Managers mention the need for better retention in new candidates.

**To address this:**

- Mentorships provide better grounding for new employees and help them learn and grow faster in the EA community.
- Consider an EA-wide Slack channel for new employees to chat, ask questions, and create friendships considering our hybrid-working model.
- There should be a way for staff to give feedback, for example, creating ways to collect feedback anonymously to remove the fear of retaliation alongside implementing 360 evaluations in the same way performance reviews are done. This can be quarterly or yearly, but it should allow for continuous growth, awareness, and transparency for both managers and employees.



- The employee experience is built around assumptions about the “ideal” employee that no longer hold true for our current workforce, which, among other things, is more disabled and neurodivergent than the workforce of the past.
  - We should revisit employee onboarding, job design, and the manager-direct report experience to be more accessible, then integrate these changes into our general management training.

## Appendix B

### External Affairs Nov. 2021 Diversity Counts

#### MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION, GOVT & COMM AFFAIRS, FEDERAL RELATIONS

##### November 2021 Staff Counts

IPEDS Race	Count of Staff	% of Total
Black or African American	7	6.2%
Hispanic	7	6.2%
White	91	80.5%
Others*	8	7.1%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Gender	Count of Staff	% of Total
Female	71	62.8%
Male	42	37.2%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

*\*Others include Asian, Two or More Races, & Missing Race.*