

Association of Registrars and Collections Specialist

Internal Review of Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility FINAL REPORT

IDEA Task Force 2020-2021

January 2022

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1. Executive Summary

Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) is a practice that requires commitment and intentionality. One of the main goals for any organization is to create a more just community. There is a responsibility to foster a culture of belonging, especially for those that have experienced discrimination, oppression, and marginalization.

Organizational Background

The Association of Registrars and Collections Specialists (ARCS) is a network organization focused on educating and advocating for registrars and collections specialists. The organization is composed of a Board of Directors, Executive Committee, and other various committees charged with enacting programs, policies, and developing resources for their members. ARCS was formally established in 2012, having grown from the Registrars Committee of the American Association of Museums (RC-AAM). Some individuals from RC-AAM desired a more focused community of registrars and collections specialists and thus, decided to separate from the parent organization. At the time, this was the American Association of Museums but was later renamed the American Alliance of Museums (AAM).

In 2020, ARCS restructured its organizational operation into the Board delegating various responsibilities to smaller committee groups. The new model was established to allow more flexibility, intentionality, and member-focused initiatives. The Board felt it was essential to “embed” the values and practices of IDEA into the functions of the association by encouraging committees to integrate these ideas into their work. By the summer of 2020, the economic and socio-political repercussions of a global pandemic combined with the impetus created by Black Lives Matter movement heightened the awareness and acknowledgement of systemic racism and white supremacy. It prompted many individuals and institutions to start addressing their own internal biases and harmful practices. The ARCS Board felt it was necessary to take a look at their own organization and assess the realities of their work on IDEA by establishing an IDEA Task Force.

This report is broken out into four sections:

- The first section is the detailed executive summary.
- The second section identifies the scope and methodology of the IDEA Task Force for the duration of the internal review, including the extended time to complete the initial *charge*.
- The third section is split into three subsections that detail the breadth of work conducted by the IDEA Task Force.
 - The first sub-section details the research and organizational documentation review the IDEA Task Force completed for the internal review.
 - The second subsection describes the IDEA Task Force’s approach to collecting international information from current members and committees through an intentional survey.

- The third subsection reviews the various committee attended meetings IDEA Task Force members joined to inform overall structural and operational practices of IDEA.
- The fourth section of the report provides detailed recommendations for ARCS leadership to reflect on and consider detailed from short-term implementation to long-term action.

While writing this report, IDEA Task Force Members were sensitive to the confidentiality of members, committee chairs and members, Board, etc. Therefore, the following observations presented will not provide specific details about individuals' whose responses and actions informed sections of this report. Rather, it will speak more broadly and protect anonymity. This is incredibly important to maintain trust and to ensure that communications from ARCS internal stakeholders to the IDEA Task Force remains candid and honest.

IDEA Task Force

The IDEA Task Force is composed of individuals whose interests and passions are directly impacted and influenced by inclusion efforts, diversity, equity principles, and accessibility practices. However, none of these individuals are trained DEAI experts in the organizational assessment of these values. It is important to recognize this as a limitation when considering the Task Force's charge. While these individuals are capable and willing to support an internal review of IDEA, as members and non-members of ARCS, their opinions, observations, and recommendations are a reflection of their personal and professional insights as they relate to being registrars and collections specialists in the field.

End of Executive Summary

2. Scope and Methodology

In July 2020, the Association of Registrars and Collections Specialists (ARCS) solicited a call for nominations for an Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Task Force. The call for nominations included a summary of intention and general statement of tasks and activities:

“ARCS desires to create and nurture a culture of inclusion to ensure the ARCS community reflects the diverse identities and experiences of its members. The charge of the new Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA) Task Force is to examine and broaden representation of ARCS.

Tasks and activities include, but are not limited to:

- **Explore and define ARCS mission to promote diversity, inclusion, and accessibility.**
- **Identify policies and procedures in cultivating and retaining a diverse membership.**
- **Identify funding sources to help in the promotion of diverse membership and allow for accessibility**

Please nominate a colleague, regardless of ARCS membership status, who you believe would be an energetic, knowledgeable, and engaged part of our active discussion. Self-nominations are encouraged.”

By October 2020, eight individuals were selected by the Nominations Committee for the IDEA Task Force and formally charged with the following responsibility:

“Over the course of the next six months, examine the internal structures of ARCS and make recommendations for ways the organization can center on inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility throughout its core activities, consistent with the values stated in the ARCS strategic plan:

- **Demonstrate the Ethics of the Profession**
- **Accountability to Membership**
- **Model Transparency**
- **Promote Inclusivity”**

TASK FORCE MEMBERS AND SCOPE OF WORK

The commencement of the IDEA Task Force was led by the ARCS Vice President and Board Liaison. Two co-chairs were appointed and six additional individuals were selected to serve as members of the IDEA Task Force for a total of nine participants.

Members of the IDEA Task Force recognized early in the process that the initial six month timeline that the ARCS Board had budgeted for this work was not sufficient for an accurate or thorough review of internal operations. The strain on this timeline was further exacerbated by the lack of organizational information available to the IDEA Task Force as they began the review.

In March 2021, the two co-chairs requested an extension for the IDEA Task Force to continue its internal review through June 2021. At the time, the review processes consisted of internal and external research on IDEA within the field, an organizational survey tool, committee meeting engagements, and individual ARCS member discussions with IDEA Task Force Members. In this same month, the IDEA Task Force participated in the monthly ARCSchat, introducing themselves, discussing the charge, and detailing the scope of work to general membership.

In April 2021, the IDEA Task Force was asked to assist with an *ad hoc* response to the sexually and racially charged hate crime in Atlanta, GA, where a white gunman killed eight people, six of whom were Asian American women.

In June 2021, the IDEA Task Force submitted an interim deliverable to the Board for review: the *IDEA Task Force Preliminary Recommendations and Proposal*. Concurrently, the IDEA Task Force asked for an extension for the final report.

In July 2021, the IDEA Task Force was asked if they'd like to participate in the annual conference in November 2021. Later in that same month, IDEA Task Force Members met with the Conference Logistics Team to discuss how the sessions should be formatted. After deliberation, the IDEA Task Force agreed to participate in five sessions that were formatted as caucus discussions with the following:

- Small group sessions to promote honest dialogue
- Sessions were not going to be recorded for privacy and encourage trust
- IDEA Task Force members would act as facilitators

IDEA Task Force Members were informed that utilizing the boardroom functionality of the Social27 platform would be a better fit as it allowed for a discussion format rather than a webinar format.

The five session topics were:

- Resiliency and DEAI as Justice Work
- Conservation and Community Knowledge
- Race and Microaggressions in Collections Management
- Work/Life Balance
- Representation Matters: IDEA in Exhibitions

IDEA Task Force Members incorporated preparation and research for the conference sessions into their workflow, discussing their progress at each meeting. They also met separately with their co-facilitators for planning. This added a substantial amount of work and time commitment onto the IDEA Task Force's already busy schedule. IDEA Task Force Members were met with the following challenges in November 2021:

- Exclusion from the “schedule-at-glance” and ARCS Conference website as the sessions were boardrooms so they had to be accessed via a separate tab on the platform.
- In July 2021, the IDEA Task Force was told that access would be given to the Social27 platform to test out the boardrooms at the beginning of November. The IDEA Task Force discovered in November 2021 that unless members registered as conference attendees, they would not be provided this access.
- The sessions would not be provided tech support as they are boardrooms.
- Boardrooms were on a separate tab from other conference content because of their format.

Completed work for the IDEA Task Force, including work developed, drafted, and submitted prior to the final report include:

- Review of internal and external documents and communications about ARCS organizational mission, goals, strategic plan, activities and programming, and membership;
- Review of internal structure and organizational planning;
- Stakeholder Survey development, execution, and response analysis;
- March 2, 2021 ARCSchat
- Committee and Board meeting attendance and engagement;
- Support of *ad hoc* Asian American and Pacific Islander Statement of Solidarity;
- The IDEA Task Force Preliminary Recommendations and Proposal, June 2021;
- Participation in five sessions at the ARCS Virtual Conference, November 2021;
- Proposal for Standing IDEA Committee with ARCS; and,
- The IDEA Task Force Internal Review of IDEA Practices Report, December 2021.

TASK FORCE METHODOLOGY

The IDEA Task Force repeatedly requested information from ARCS leadership and committees, hoping to obtain information relevant to:

- The history of the organization
- Statistics and metrics for membership and engagement
- Criteria and program information
- Financial documentation

Limited access to and lack of documentation for this information prompted the IDEA Task Force to consider alternative means of capturing internal commitments and practices of IDEA. Based on the information that was provided to the IDEA Task Force, it was difficult to discern community sentiments and comprehension of these practices within the organization. In addition, the IDEA Task Force has yet to meet with the full Board to discuss these matters.

The IDEA Task Force prioritized the creation of space and communication that could develop and support trust, authenticity, and candor amongst its members. Additionally, the IDEA Task Force co-chairs asked that the Board Liaison not attend meetings as the group began the process of internal review. The IDEA Task Force scheduled meetings that occurred weekly for an hour starting in October 2020. These meetings often extended to two, sometimes three, hours. It should also be noted that the frequency and duration of the meetings is significantly higher than all other committee meetings within ARCS. This type of expectation and time commitment was needed due to the work the IDEA Task Force was charged with but inevitably led to burnout, causing several members of the IDEA Task Force to resign despite their passion and dedication to this important work.

The following were listed as conditions of the IDEA Task Force's weekly commitment to the *charge*:

- Creation of non-ARCS virtual meeting space to ensure the privacy and anonymity of the IDEA Task Force's internal review;
- Creation of non-ARCS managed shared folder to gather data and resources so that annotation and documentation review was held in confidentiality;
- Relieving the ARCS Vice President and Board Liaison from attending meetings to remove internal bias;
- Deciding not to audio or video record meetings with the intent of maintaining confidentiality of member discussions; and,
- Providing ample time in early meetings for IDEA Task Force members to become comfortable with one another and the work they were asked to complete.

As the IDEA Task Force began to review, research, and connect ARCS's organizational structure to IDEA values and practices, the IDEA Task Force members identified limitations to their ability to conduct the internal review:

- Organizational history and administrative documentation was limited, if not available due to lack of retaining and maintaining records;
- Demographic and historic documentation was limited due to lack of soliciting information regarding these details and retaining the information available;
- Communication and scheduling with multiple committees and individuals required time that extended the feasibility of the IDEA Task Force being able to meet the six month timeline;
- Challenges internally within the IDEA Task Force also arose such as: scheduling conflicts and inconsistent communication with the Board Liaison; and,
- There was no methodology, processes, or metrics defined by the Board upon formation of the IDEA Task Force. In addition, the inquiry for an internal review was not proposed in the July 2021 call. This obscurity led to a disconnect amongst the ARCS committees and membership about the IDEA Task Force's role and responsibilities. Furthermore, it created confusion and caused strain amongst the IDEA Task Force Members as it required Members to be flexible to the changing asks of the scope and work.

Content in this final report has been developed and articulated by members of the IDEA Task Force in support and collaboration with the ARCS Vice President. The Observations and Recommendations detailed are a collective account of information and synthesis of observations and data collected through three separate methods:

- **Documentation Review and Research:** the IDEA Task Force assessed the available documents ARCS administration was able to provide. They also reviewed information available through the website, online and email communications, social media, and previous committee survey tools. Further appraisal occurred when members worked directly with other ARCS committees, administrators, and Board Members.
- **Stakeholder Survey:** the IDEA Task Force developed and shared a stakeholder survey designed to capture the current practices and interests in IDEA at the Board, Committee Chair, Committee Member, and General Membership levels. Data from this survey was used to inform some of the gaps in information mentioned above. The data also allowed the IDEA Task Force to gauge the relationship between external knowledge, such as membership impact, of IDEA within ARCS to the internal practices of IDEA, such as committee and board engagement.
- **Committee Meeting and Individual Meeting Interviews:** the IDEA Task Force intentionally scheduled time to meet with each committee in order to determine the relationship between IDEA practices and the committee's defined responsibility to ARCS and its membership. In tandem with these larger group meetings, the IDEA Task Force offered space and time for individuals to privately converse with them about any further comments, questions, or concerns related to IDEA and ARCS.

End of Scope and Methodology

3. Findings/Observations

a. Documentation Review and Research

Upon formation of the IDEA Task Force in October 2020, members convened and agreed that the first step of the internal review was to familiarize themselves with ARCS' history, structure, and any previous IDEA efforts within the association. The co-chairs requested these relevant documents from the ARCS Vice President and Board Liaison. In November 2020, the Board Liaison shared documents relating to ARCS' governance and history, board and committee structure composition, conference and surveys. Due to a lack of formal communication structures, information regarding global outreach, education, and membership was not obtained.

IDEA Task Force Members formed smaller groups to read and analyze this documentation during other scheduled times. Each small group debriefed their findings to the larger group during weekly meetings. The information that was provided to IDEA Task Force Members was not comprehensive. Some record-keeping was incomplete making it difficult to assess where ARCS stood as an organization in regards to IDEA. In addition, ARCS' statements regarding racial and social justice movements such as the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement were not readily accessible and findable on the website.

IDEA Task Force Members conducted research into DEAI efforts in the field to capture vital and instructional data and evaluations completed by colleagues and experts. Additional research materials included review and analysis of strategic plans for similar professional associations, and how cultural institutions responded to BLM, including ARCS' statement that is listed below for reference.

This exploration into the broader field proved to be incredibly helpful as it provided insight into the spectrum of responses and action. This research informed the language used when speaking with internal ARCS stakeholders and later when crafting the initial report. It showed the dichotomy between the following:

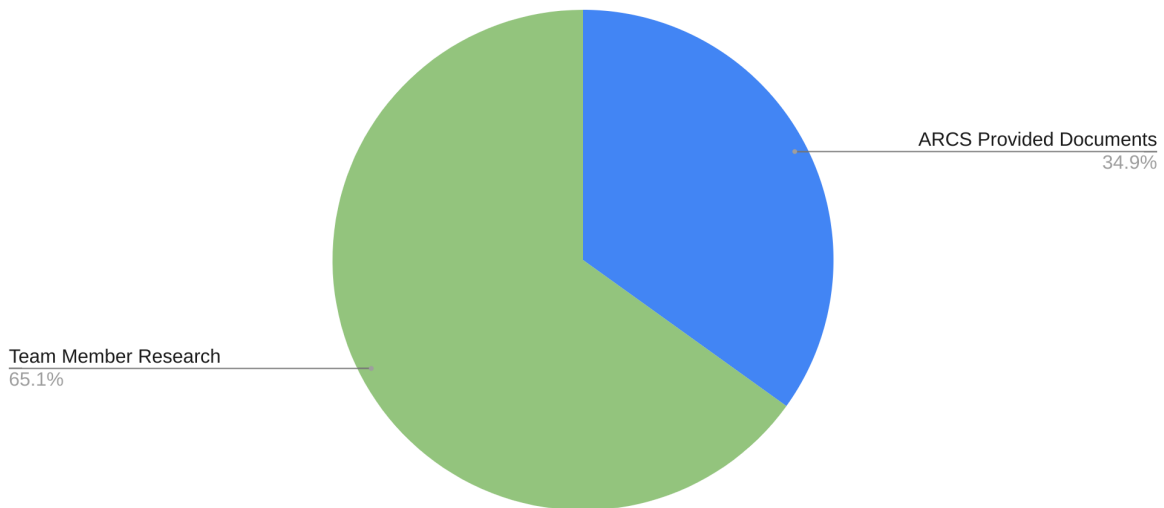
- A performative statement that was issued because the organization felt it needed to release something, therefore creating disingenuous expectations and connections with hurt communities by saying nothing substantial.

vs.

- Intentional statement drafting that addressed the root causes of white supremacy and police brutality and demanded accountability, reform, and change.

It should also be reiterated that this type of work and actual, effectual change takes time. The initial charge of six months provided by ARCS was not enough. In addition, there were no monetary resources provided to IDEA Task Force Members for additional support and training. When looking at other professional associations in the field such as AAM, their DEAI working

group was launched in Spring 2017, composed of over 20 professionals in the field, whose research and work was fiscally supported and backed by AAM.



ARCS Statements

In April 2021, the IDEA Task Force was asked to assist with an *ad hoc* response to the sexually and racially charged hate crime in Atlanta, GA, where a white gunman killed eight people, six of whom were Asian American women. IDEA Task Force Members' previous research into what makes a thoughtful, supportive, and powerful response versus a generic, blanket statement greatly impacted IDEA Task Force Members' actions in the *ad hoc* group. Contributions by IDEA Task Force Members included the identification and condemnation of violence rooted in white supremacy, imperialism, colonialism, and a history of violence and degradation against the AAPI community in the United States. Members from the IDEA Task Force who participated in the *ad hoc* efforts strongly felt the original statement could have been interpreted as performative; an aspect of many solidarity statements that ultimately insult a community grieving from trauma.

IDEA Task Force Members met with the ARCS Vice President and expressed these thoughts candidly. In this meeting, IDEA Task Force Members presented ideas to rewrite the statement to make it more intentional and impactful as well as recognizing the shock and anguish the AAPI community was experiencing. When this sentiment was expressed to the broader *ad hoc* group in an email thread, the responses ranged from "we should... send out a statement which is repetitive... The IDEA Project has been created to cover all this" to "we should stay in our lane and maybe focus on the professional support we give our members and the industry."

ARCS Vice President thoughtfully incorporated IDEA Task Force Members' suggestions and rewrote the statement, including the names of the victims as well as addressing the origin of this hate crime: anti-Asian racism in the United States. The statement also promised that ARCS would continue to educate itself and should be held accountable. This was presented to the

Board, accepted, and issued publicly shortly afterward (see **ARCS Board of Directors & Committees Statement on the Recent Violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) from March 25, 2021** below).

One of the main topics that IDEA Task Force Members had discussed with the ARCS Vice President was the importance of accountability and follow-up. As of January 2022, at the time that this report is being submitted, additional follow-up with ARCS membership of how ARCS has been continuing their education and support of the AAPI community has yet to be made transparently available. In the initial discussion with the ARCS Vice President, the IDEA Task Force also discussed the possibility of a capital campaign where ARCS would match donations to AAPI support funds. This would have required additional coordination so it was not announced at the time the statement was released. Accountability remains an elusive aspect of ARCS' ability to illustrate its current and continual commitments to DEAI work. It is important to approach this work genuinely, avoiding performative behaviors such as: lack of follow through, speaking to action without taking action, and praising idealization of allyship. These are prevalent issues not only within the field but throughout all DEAI work.

ARCS Board of Directors & Committees Statement on the Recent Violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) from March 25, 2021

Last Tuesday, March 16, Xiaojie Tan, Daoyou Feng, Delaina Ashley Yaun Gonzalez, Paul Andre Michels, Soon Chung Park, Hyun Jung Grant, Suncha Kim, and Yong Ae Yue were murdered in the Metropolitan area of Atlanta, Georgia. Six of the victims killed were Asian and all but one were women. This comes after a long year of over 3,800 incidences of anti-Asian racism in the United States taking the form of violence and harassment, which has been bolstered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The ARCS Board and Committees are frustrated, angered, confused, and upset. We are grieving and processing. We are recognizing our role in living in a society that allows for this type of racism to grow and persist. We are trying to understand how cultural heritage organizations, the places where registrars and collection specialists work and often feel at home, have been a contributing piece of this society, and how we can and should intervene. We are beginning to understand our place in such events and are honestly at a loss of words following this horrible tragedy.

To our Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) colleagues: we hear you. We want to be there for you, and we are trying to figure out how we can. We promise to continue our efforts to reflect upon ourselves, both as an organization but also as individuals, to better protect and uplift you. We are thinking of you as we continue our education process. We know that statements are only words, and that our actions will speak louder. Please hold us accountable to our actions to make sure we are being true to our words.

We invite all our members to join us in the education process and review the following resources:

StopAAPIHate.org

Asian American Community Resources

Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center: Standing Together Against Xenophobia

National African American History and Culture: Talking About Race

And for those members who are financially able, we encourage you to consider researching and donating to an organization that will support your AAPI colleagues and friends.

#stopasianhate #stopAAPIhate

ARCS Board of Directors & Committees Statement on the Recent Violence against Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI) - Original Draft Statement pre-IDEA Task Force input

The ARCS Board and Committees have been deeply troubled and saddened by the domestic terrorism attacks last week that took the lives of six Asian American women, among others.

ARCS stands in solidarity with its Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) members and members of the registrar and collections specialist community against all verbal and physical acts of anti-Asian racism. Asian and Asian-American collections care professionals deserve to feel safe, especially in a workplace environment. In cultural spaces such as museums, historic, and national heritage sites, we believe it is our responsibility and duty to welcome and represent all communities. We encourage all members and their institutions to uphold our professional values of diversity, equality, and inclusion.

ARCS continues to work to develop initiatives specifically aimed at creating a better and more inclusive cultural heritage community.

Please explore the following resources:

- [StopAAPIHate.org](https://stopaapihate.org)
- [Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center: Standing Together Against Xenophobia](https://www.si.edu/standtogether)
- [National African American History and Culture: Talking About Race](https://www.naahc.org/talking-about-race)

#stopasianhate #stopAAPIhate

ARCS Board of Directors: Statement Regarding Black Lives Matter from June 4, 2020

ARCS is a membership organization dedicated to the advancement of registrars and collections specialists. In serving this role, we find ourselves in the position of having to take a stance on political and social issues, especially in instances that affect our members. Today we feel it is

necessary to take a stance, and recognize the anger and pain that many of our colleagues are experiencing.

It is our responsibility to advocate and support Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. We stand in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. ARCS is committed to the idea that the cultural heritage and creative achievements of all peoples must be acknowledged and honored. In our role as caretakers of rich and diverse collections, it is our responsibility to ensure that the evidence of these cultures is preserved and passed onto future generations, even if that evidence is sometimes uncomfortable or challenging.

Through our support of collections care professionals, we are actively working to create an inclusive and equitable environment that supports diversity at all stages of education and professional development in order to create a multi-faceted workforce, with the varied skills, perspectives, life experiences, and knowledge base needed to ensure proper stewardship of collections everywhere. As we move forward, ARCS will continue to evaluate our organization and its culture, and prioritize efforts to ensure that members from all cultures are represented, heard, and valued. We will do this by listening and respectfully learning from community leaders and organizers and our members who represent marginalized communities.

While it feels like the world is burning around us, it is important for us to look at what ties us together. We believe in museums as a place of solace, comfort, community, and awakening for all people. We believe that art and artifact collections can educate and empower. Perhaps most importantly, we believe that we are all made better by working together.

-ARCS Board of Directors

End Documentation Review and Research

3. Findings/Observations

b. Stakeholder Survey

The Stakeholder Surveys were created to assess past and current IDEA work efforts within ARCS due to the limited information provided by ARCS as stated in the Documentation Review and Research section. The goal of the surveys was to provide the necessary data to gauge stakeholder experiences and perspectives of ARCS' performance as it pertains to IDEA actions. IDEA Task Force Members spent several months researching and crafting questions as well as discussing best practices of gathering, protecting, and analyzing data. Of greatest concern to the Task Force was the protection of individual privacy and anonymity. Including demographic questions on the surveys was considered; however, the Membership Engagement Survey released on January 28, 2021 captured the information that ultimately provided further insight for this report.

Five separate surveys were created to gauge understanding, implementation, and investment of IDEA for each ARCS group:

- Board Members
- Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs
- Committee Members
- Board/Committee Emeritus
- Members

The questions were formed using strategic language to avoid creating biases; the IDEA Task Force also paid careful attention to the sequencing of the questions. The questions were structured using a combination of answers requiring either a ranking scale, 5-point rating scale, yes or no, multiple-choice, and a single free text field.

The following first four statements and questions appear on all surveys and focus on IDEA practices within ARCS:

- It is important for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA) to play a role in ARCS
- ARCS promotes a culture of IDEA
- Have you observed IDEA actions within ARCS?
- Accountability for ARCS' IDEA actions should rest with which areas?

Also common to all surveys is the last question, the free text field, that asks respondents if a post-survey interview with a IDEA Task Force member would be of interest. Unfortunately, this question was not effective or useful as the format lacked a way to capture respondent email addresses as well as allow for immediate notifications to the IDEA Task Force to contact respondents in a timely manner. This limitation, while unfortunate in the survey execution, was not exclusive to the survey. All members of ARCS internal committees were provided the opportunity to interview with IDEA Task Force members and given the information to do so.

On each survey, the following statement was present:

We as the IDEA Task Force for ARCS are excited to share with the ARCS Stakeholder Community a survey designed to gauge your experiences with ARCS's practices of IDEA. We want this survey to be a space for authentic responses to your experience so we can continue to audit the internal commitments to IDEA.

Responses to the survey are anonymous, but aggregated data and quotes may be used in a report that will be shared publicly. Anyone can take advantage of one-on-one meetings with the Task Force members to dive deeper into survey responses. If you have any questions feel free to reach out to the IDEA Task Force Co-Chairs Renee Anderson (ARCSRenee@gmail.com) and Adriane Tafoya (adrianetafoya@gmail.com).

Thanks again for your time.

Four surveys were released on April 29, 2021 and the fifth the following week. On May 19, 2021, 112 responses were received out of over 1,000 sent. The minimal number of engagements prompted the IDEA Task Force to request an extension of the survey deadline to the end of May with additional reminders sent to ARCS members to take the survey. The final respondee count as of June 3, 2021 was 197 responses. IDEA Task Force members reminded committee members to take the survey when meeting with them during committee interviews. The information gathered from those meetings is discussed in the next section of the report.

Survey responses received:

Board Members: 10 (out of 14)

Committee Chairs/Co-Chairs: 7 (out of 22)

Committee Members: 22 (out of 57)

Board/Committee Emeritus: 5 (out of 19)

Active Members: 153 (out of 915)

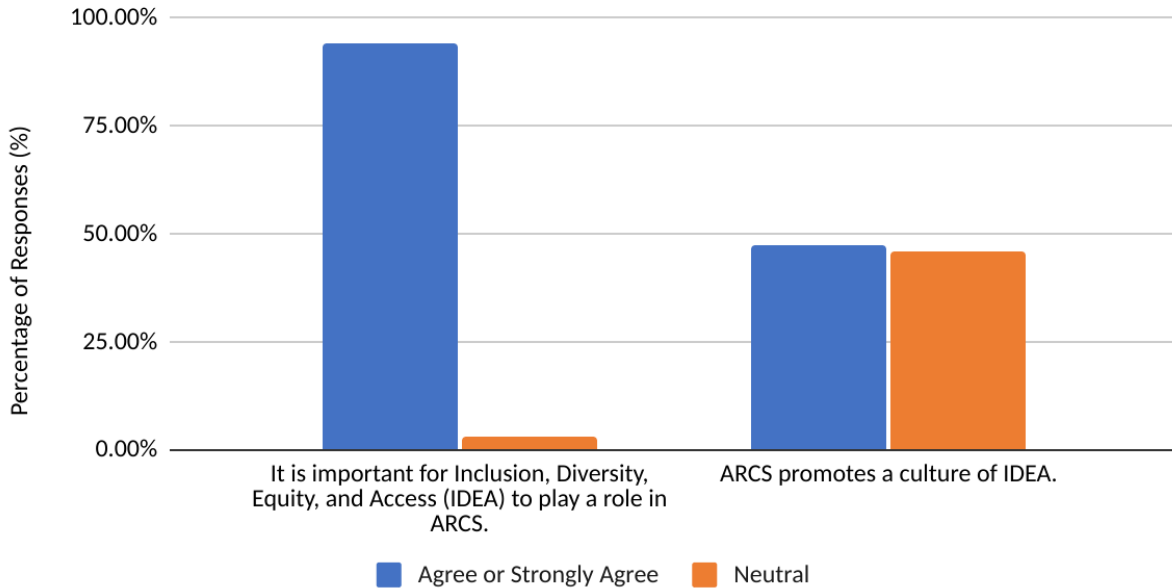
(April 2021 totals)

Summary of responses to common questions

Responses showed that all groups unanimously **Strongly Agree** that it is important that IDEA plays a role in ARCS. However, in response to the statement, *ARCS promotes a culture of IDEA*, Members, Chairs/Co-Chairs, and Emeritus mostly ranked **Neutral** while the Board and Committee members mostly ranked **Agree** to this statement (see graph below).

IDEA Importance vs. ARCS Promotes IDEA Culture

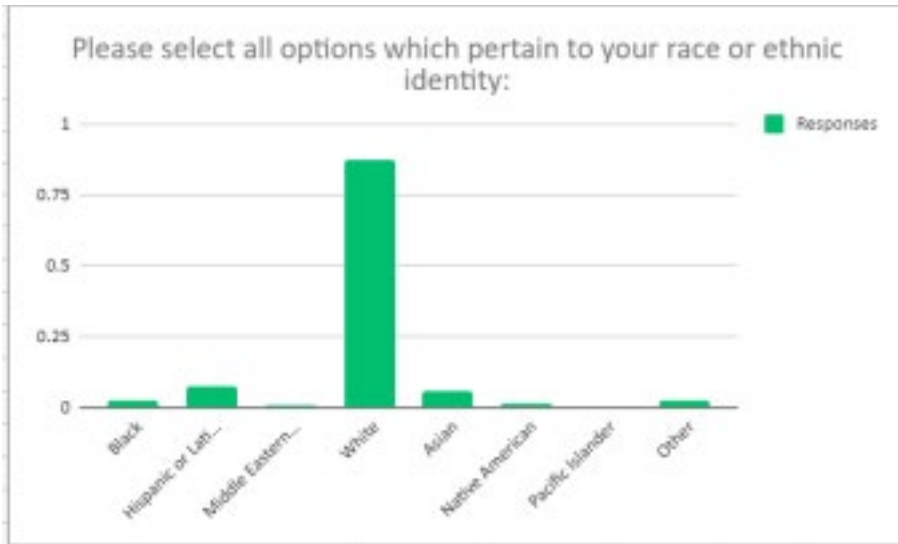
Survey Responses for All Stakeholders



Results to the question, *Have you observed IDEA actions within ARCS?*, were mostly ranked **Sometimes** with the exception of the Board responses, which was 50/50 between **Sometimes** and **Agree**.

With the exception of Emeritus, the responses to IDEA training through ARCS were overwhelmingly favorable.

ARCS Membership Engagement Survey January 2021		
Please select all options which pertain to your race or ethnic identity:		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Black	2.42%	7
Hispanic or Latinx	7.27%	21
Middle Eastern or North African	0.69%	2
White	87.54%	253
Asian	5.54%	16
Native American	1.04%	3
Pacific Islander	0.00%	0
Other	2.42%	7
	Answered	289



ARCS Membership Engagement Survey January 2021

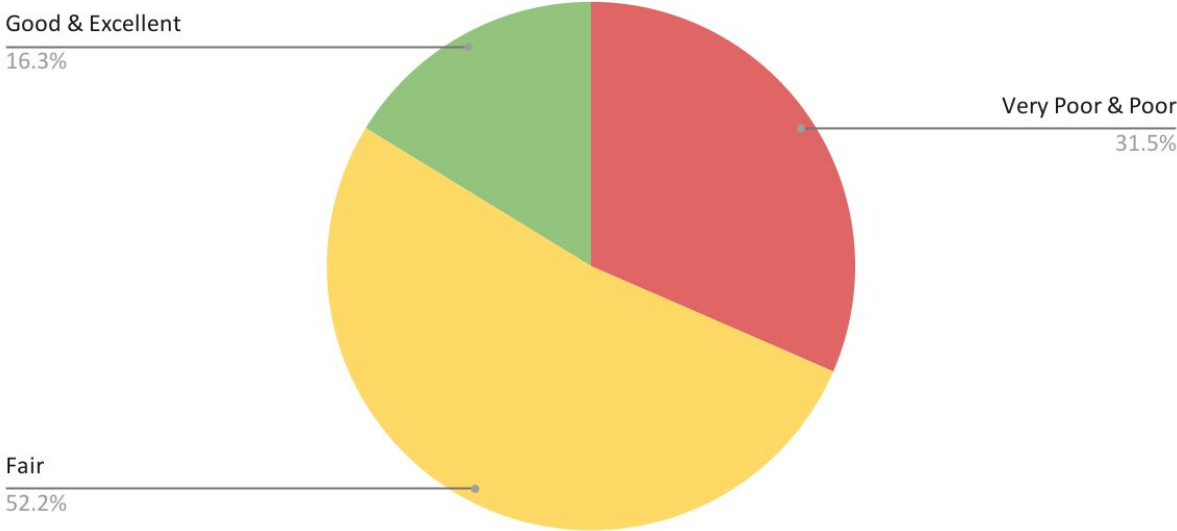
What is your gender identity? (Select one)

Answer Choices:	Responses	
Female	93.08%	269
Male	6.57%	19
Other	0.35%	1
Answered		289



How would you describe the diversity of ARCS (committee members, committee chairs, board)?

Survey Responses for All Stakeholders

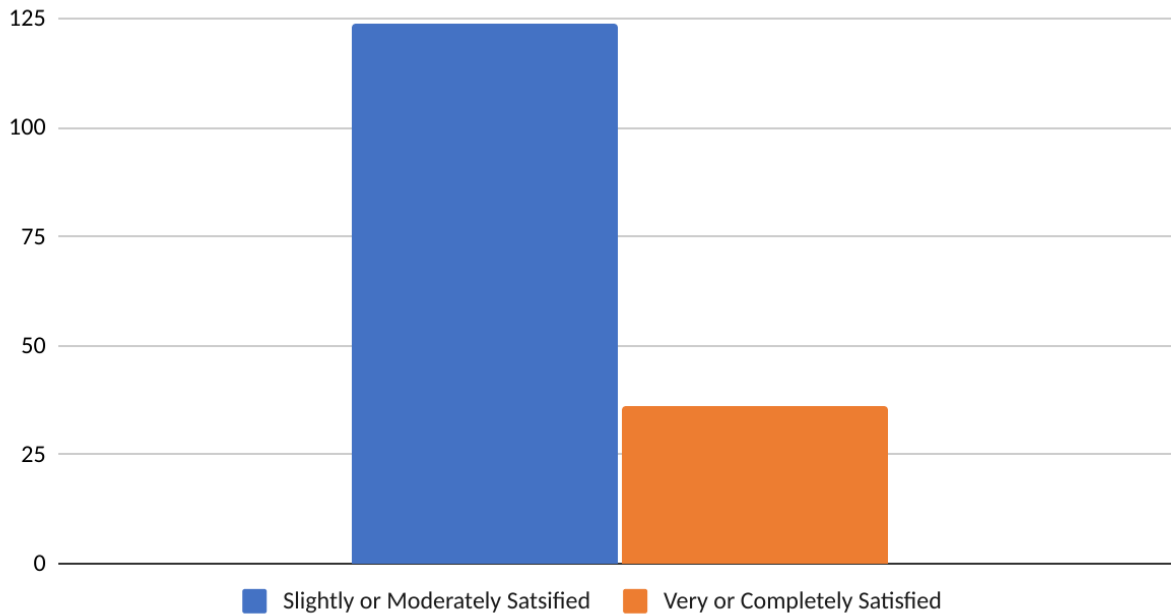


Responses to specific areas of diversity, accessibility, transparency and advocacy were mixed; however, the groups ranked diversity within ARCS as **Fair to Very Poor**.

Responses to equity questions, *Describe frequency of equity actions in ARCS membership* and *Describe frequency of equity actions in ARCS committee chair cohort*, were majority ranked as **Sometimes** across the five survey groups.

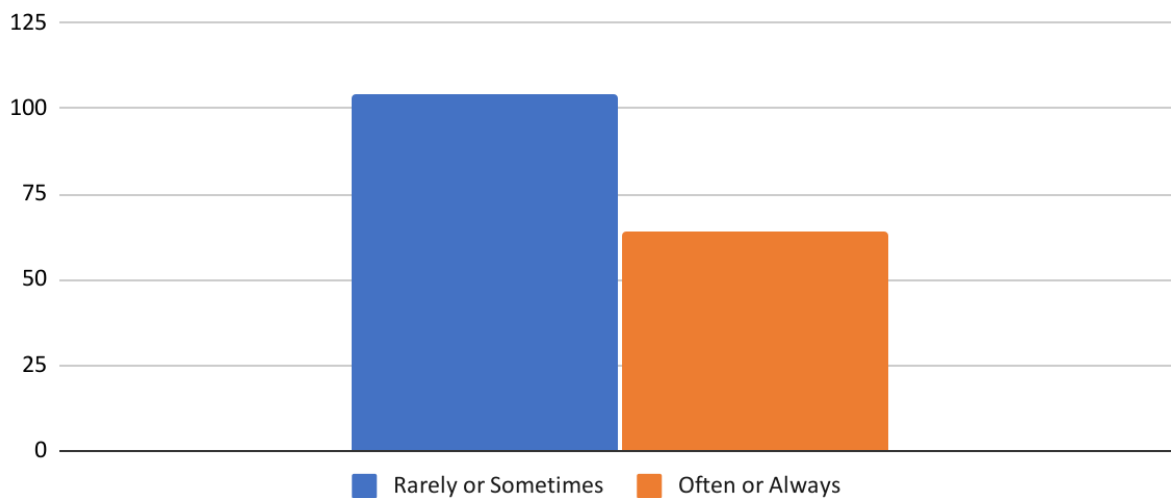
Rate satisfaction with current advocacy actions by ARCS?

Survey Responses for All Stakeholders



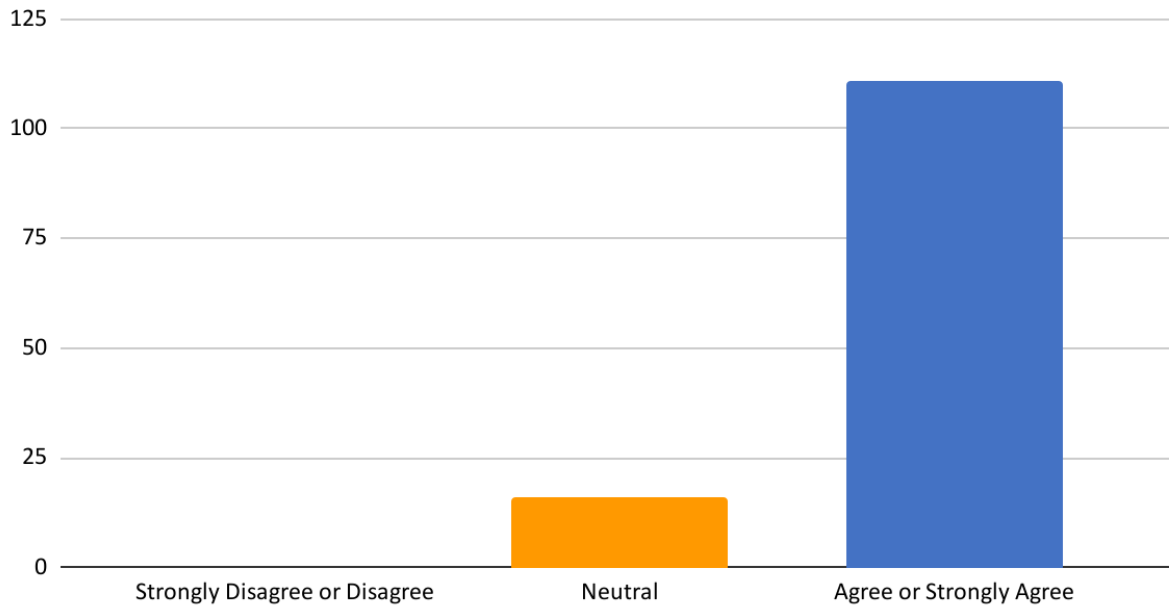
How would you rate the occurrence of ARCS' accessibility actions in communications?

Survey Responses for All Stakeholders



Should ARCS increase advocacy activities on behalf of members?

Survey Responses for Member Stakeholders



Advocacy actions ranked mostly as **Slightly Satisfied** or **Moderately Satisfied** while accessibility actions ranked mostly as **Sometimes**. The Member survey included a question that asked if ARCS should increase advocacy on behalf of their members with responses ranked from **Agree** to **Strongly Agree**.

Accountability to IDEA actions responses mostly ranked with the Board; however, the responses were skewed due to the option to choose **Always**.

Summary of Committee and Chair/Co-Chair responses to ARCS strategic plan questions

Responses to statements, *I understand how IDEA connects to ARCS strategic plan and Committee goals are clearly delineated and tied to the strategic plan* both ranked between **Neutral** and **Agree**. However, responses to *How would you rate accountability measures for each committee's adherence to the strategic plan?* were majority ranked as **Good**.

Although less than two hundred responses were received from the surveys it provided a useful amount of insight for the purpose of this report. In June, the IDEA Task Force provided a preliminary report to the Board that included some of the observations and recommendations included in this report. The IDEA Task Force was interested in obtaining their feedback on the following:

- Type of topics covered in the report;
- Missed topics and/or facts or information overlooked;

Thoughts on next steps

The preliminary report also provided a general outline for ARCS IDEA Task Force/Committee's continued work. Board Members were asked to review and comment on the preliminary report. As the IDEA Task Force continued the review and analysis of the organization's commitments to DEAI, responses from the Board aided in the Task Force's ability to articulate clear areas of need. A complete summary of recommendations, including the initial ones recommended in the preliminary report can be found in Section 4: Recommendations.

End Stakeholder Survey

3. Findings/Observations

c. Committee Meetings and Individual Interviews

The IDEA Task Force needed to collect information about each of the committees established in ARCS' organizational structure that detailed the role of IDEA within the scope of committee responsibilities. While descriptions for some committees were available online through ARCS' website, the scope of these descriptions did not address or speak to the development or implementation of IDEA practices.

After extensive research (covered in Sections 3a and 3b), four specific questions were crafted by the IDEA Task Force to pose to each committee (with the exception of the Executive Committee and the Board, which followed looser structures and more pointed questions) was developed by the IDEA Task Force. In order to ensure that the IDEA Task Force's responsibility of identifying internal barriers to IDEA within the organization was met, it was important to ensure that the questions asked did not lead committee members or create partiality in their understanding of IDEA. The sequence of questions was as follows:

1. What are this committee's responsibilities to ARCS?
2. How are IDEA values integrated into the work this committee does?
3. How are IDEA values hindered in the work this committee does?
4. What questions do you have for the IDEA Task Force?

The two most challenging aspects of the IDEA Task Force's work when communicating with committee members and chairs throughout the interview and internal review processes were:

1. The assumption that the IDEA Task Force was established to provide recommendations and solutions to IDEA needs and concerns for each committee (the context to this confusion is addressed in Section 2. Scope and Methodology.)
2. No organizational definitions were created by an authoritative body for Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility.

During a three-month period — from March to May — the IDEA Task Force members attended a total of 20 ARCS Committee meetings, including a meeting with the Board. IDEA Task Force Members introduced themselves, engaged in committee meetings by soliciting the series of questions developed by the team, and then either departed meetings or remained as observers for the remainder of the Committee meeting. On occasion, supplemental or clarifying questions were posed to the committees during their time with IDEA Task Force members. IDEA Task Force members also encouraged committee members to participate in the IDEA Survey and take the opportunity as individuals to meet with members from the IDEA Task Force separately.

Committee Meeting Findings

First, it must be acknowledged that each committee meeting was conducted in separate virtual environments with a variety of IDEA Task Force Members in attendance. Documentation for each of these meetings was completed by an IDEA Task Force member; other members, either in attendance or not in attendance, were asked to review the document and provide annotative observations based on the content of each meeting.

One of the limitations of the internal review is understanding the varying degrees of opportunity to participate in committee meetings, and the individuals from the IDEA Task Force who were available to attend. While each IDEA Task Force member was able to engage with the notes from each committee meeting, not all members participated in these meetings to the same degree.

Review of the 20 different committee meeting notes completed by the IDEA Task Force internal review siphoned committees into four distinct groups based on their responses to the four questions developed by the IDEA Task Force. The schedule for committee meeting times and IDEA Task Force Member attendance can be found in Appendix D.

Named Priority — the committee distinctly named IDEA as priorities for their members, their programming, and their internal work with considerations for the limitations of IDEA goals and practices and plans to continue addressing their committee's barriers to IDEA.

Unnamed Priority — the committee either directly or indirectly identified IDEA values and actions as a part of their overall commitments and actions within their responsibilities to ARCS with some to no recognition of their barriers or limitations.

Unessential — the committee either explicitly struggled to identify IDEA as a part of their responsibility or ARCS, or was unsure how to integrate IDEA into their work and therefore voluntarily or involuntarily left it out of their programming and operations.

Disregarded — Committees categorized as *disregarded* explicitly dismissed IDEA as a part of their committee's responsibilities to the ARCS membership or possible actions and programs. While verging on *unessential*, the defining difference is in how the committee represents or provides space for IDEA to exist within its structure. Some committees within this category shared limited thoughts about IDEA or neglected IDEA as part of their overall practice.

Named Priority

- Membership Advocacy Committee
- Emergency Preparedness Committee
- Awards and Travel Awards Sub-Committee
- Conference Content Committee

Unnamed Priority

- MeetUps Sub-Committee
- Courier Training Sub-Committee
- ARCS Chat Committee
- Global Initiative Committee
- Membership Development Sub-Committee
- Development Resource Task Force

Unessential

- Membership Engagement Committee
- Education Committee
- Mentorship Program Committee
- Programming Sub-Committee

Disregarded Priority

- Virtual Connections Committee
- Executive Committee
- Conference Logistics Committee
- ARCS Update Task Force
- Nominations Committee

Named Priority

Committees categorized as *Named Priority* demonstrated their commitment and accountability to IDEA efforts in both their internal operations and programming or external responsibilities to the ARCS membership and organization. Findings related to IDEA in the Membership Advocacy Committee, Emergency Preparedness Committee, Awards and Travel Awards Sub-Committee, and Conference Content Committee include:

- One or more members of the committee are able to name and define how they utilize Inclusion, Diversity, Accessibility, and Equity within the scope of their *charge* for the ARCS community.
- Committee members are supportive of the work and perspectives each individual brings to the committee and its *charge* for the larger ARCS community, with recognition of their own professional or personal limitations in practicing IDEA.
- Committee has developed and discussed programming that integrates their definitions of IDEA into a practice or action their committee is responsible for, this includes:
 - Membership Advocacy Committee — Development and presentation of diversity initiatives to the Board in June 2020;
 - Emergency Preparedness Committee — Runs programming through accessibility software to adhere to technological compliances; directly names and integrates disparities in community resources, geographic/climatic inequities; and creates multiple access points for content related to emergency planning;

- Awards and Travel Awards Sub-Committee — Internship stipend program; emphasizing access to awards for underprivileged communities; and, intentional recruitment to diversify committee members;
- Conference Content Committee — Commitment to asking what kind of content and who brings the content to the table for conference sessions.
- Could articulate challenges and barriers to their IDEA work and practices outside of their internal committee structures
 - Membership Advocacy Committee — Board commitment to IDEA training and education that supports committee IDEA structures; communication and outreach possibilities with multiple methods of access and engagement for members and other committees to engage;
 - Emergency Preparedness Committee — Lack of accessibility integration into other ARCS programming; communication of expectations between Board and committee activities and goals;
 - Awards and Travel Awards Sub-Committee — There is strained communication between committees that may be able to support one another; implementing and embodying IDEA has to start at recruitment, but ARCS struggles to understand how to implement meaningful pathways to do so;
 - Conference Content Committee — Troubles with communication outside of the ARCS community to ensure that diverse and meaningful proposals are present in the pool of possible presentations; the lack of training for members in the committee to intentionally and objectively assess proposals that bring various perspectives.

Unnamed Priority

Committees categorized as *Unnamed Priority* were able to directly or indirectly identify IDEA practices within the scope of their committee activities. At times, IDEA could be distinctly identified through an action or program, and at other times IDEA could not be recognized as being enacted through behaviors or actions of the committee. Where *Unnamed Priority* committees differ from *Named Priority* is in the ability to clearly articulate both the role of IDEA and the barriers and challenges to IDEA within the scope of their committee's *charge*.

- Committee members were familiar with IDEA in their own institutions or within the professional field and network, but unable to identify the direct implementation or effective communication of IDEA within ARCS and their committee's *charge*.
- Some committees struggled to identify how IDEA might be integral to their specific role within ARCS, and instead often named the work of other organizations as a method of integrating IDEA within their scope of responsibilities.
 - Development Resource Task Force — named the work of other organizations (such as AAM) as resources for them to redistribute to membership without consideration for the nuances in membership engagement or needs; also sought out resources from IDEA Task Force members as a way to fill gaps in their IDEA related resources;

- Global Initiative Committee — focus outside of Canada and Latin America has not been a priority for international recruitment; stated that IDEA is not a priority for the initiatives of programs or activities unless it shows up in research or conversation within the committee;
- Courier Training Committee — stated there is no specific goal or focus on IDEA within their committee activity, yet detail programmatic goals such as training for underrepresented or underfunded groups and organizations; global connections with couriers and professionals in the UK was successful; however, ARCS did not develop nor does ARCS facilitate the training and members from this committee would like to see ARCS take on more of the nuanced facilitation for its members;
- ARCS Chat Committee — detailed some opportunities for IDEA to exist within the content for chats; however, there is heavy reliance on personal and professional networks to speak to chosen topics creating very siloed opportunities to bring in experts or choose topics to cover.
- Some Committees struggled to understand the role of IDEA within their committee structure or actions, not just within the scope of their committee’s engagement or impact with the membership.
 - Development Resource Task Force — no clear filtering or vetting processes that address the practices of IDEA within the methodology of the group’s responsibilities;
 - Global Initiative Committee — no intentional dialogues being encouraged with auxiliary organizations that have international connections or memberships while ARCS has members sitting on the committees from other countries.
- Committee structure and dynamics hindered possible growth and development of IDEA within the committee and their programming efforts.
 - Membership Development Sub-Committee — member ideas were often met with responses that restricted IDEA values and prioritized exclusive access to membership opportunities;
 - Global Initiatives Committee — duplicated much of the work and activities of some other committees, either knowingly or unknowingly; recognized the lack of diversity within the group itself, and directly addressed a member stepping down to make more room for the committee’s needs;
 - Courier Training Committee — organizational demands, such as budget development and outreach with a part time task force has left some confusion about the support for the *charge* and the path moving forward.
- Some committees included members and chairs whose perceptions about IDEA and the goals of IDEA actions are performance-oriented. Some other committees felt lost at how to commit to IDEA without participating in performance-oriented practices.
 - Membership Development Sub-Committee — prioritized “getting diverse faces” pushed out on social media; pushed programming and hyper-focused on cherry picking individuals of “visually diverse” representation to be guest lecturers and speakers for programs and verbally confirmed that this would meet their diversity goals as a group.

- Development Resource Task Force — demonstrated concerns over how to not take work already done by other organizations, such as AAM, and questioned how ARCS can meet the resource needs of membership without assuming identities or resource gaps.

Unessential

Committees categorized as *unessential* were unable to name or recognize the practices or values of IDEA within the scope of their *charge* or their relationship with the ARCS member community. In considering where development for IDEA might be possible for their committee, members declined to consider IDEA as a part of the work they could do with their committee responsibilities.

- Some committees outright expressed that IDEA is either not a part of their scope of work, or that it is too challenging for them to find ways to integrate into their committee responsibilities.
 - Mentorship Program Committee — IDEA has not been a focus to change the function or services of the program. They do recognize there are opportunities to build in IDEA practices but the work has yet to be done;
 - Member Engagement Committee — operates mostly behind the scenes as the umbrella committee reviewing the work of sub-committees and task forces. IDEA Task Force members witnessed the potential barriers this committee could pose if IDEA principles are not clearly defined in the charge and within ARCS;
 - Education Committee — operates as a management committee providing oversight rather than executing programming. There were no identifiable definitions, challenges, or barriers mentioned as it pertains to implementing IDEA principles;
 - Programming Sub-Committee — expressed that the committee has been getting their footing over the past year therefore, time towards IDEA work has not been the primary focus beyond keeping programming financially accessible.
- Some committees are dramatically under-supported and therefore can only meet singular goals within their charge, and recognize that IDEA cannot be a priority for their programming and actions.
 - Mentorship Program Committee — expressed a heavy lack of support, time, and resources to adequately meet the desires of the *charge* (e.g., the capacity for IDEA to exist cannot occur because of the workload within the committee); structural differences between AAM and ARCS permit disingenuous attitudes towards trying to prioritize IDEA;
 - Member Engagement Committee — focus was on marketing and messaging as it pertains to implementing IDEA. It was stated that being “visibly diverse” is more impactful; however, this could be viewed as performative and problematic due to the emphasis on race as a marker of diverse practice;
 - Education Committee — part of their responsibility is to consider increasing diversity and accessibility through programs developed by sub-committees. They

recognize that they can implement IDEA by getting better representation of individuals and institutions in their subcommittee;

- Programming Sub-Committee — expressed they are limited to their own professional networks when it comes to building discussion topics and panelists, which is a barrier and challenges efforts in IDEA work.

Disregarded

Committees categorized as *disregarded* explicitly dismissed IDEA as a part of their committee's responsibilities to the ARCS membership or possible actions and programs. While verging on *unessential*, the defining difference is in how the committee represents or provides space for IDEA to exist within its structure. In some cases, committees that have been assigned as *disregarded* may have named IDEA as focus within their programs with no other mention of actualizing IDEA within their structure, activities, or responsibilities.

- Some committees explicitly name IDEA as something they want to prioritize, but fail to follow through with actions that demonstrate an actualization or internalization of the IDEA values and practices.
 - Executive Committee — received a recommendations report from the Member Advocacy Committee in June 2020 that outlined IDEA actions that served membership during the COVID pandemic and only acted on one recommendation: “Member Advocacy IDEA Proposal”; lacked plans for retaining and recruiting BIPOC board members;
 - Conference Logistics Committee — expressed while there is opportunity to incorporate IDEA, there is no real commitment to ensuring how that can happen.
- Some committees openly expressed the lack of need for IDEA within their committee responsibilities.
 - Virtual Connections Committee — expressed they do not necessarily keep IDEA work at the forefront as they do not provide content but instead they act as facilitators for committees and finding platforms, furthering the communication and mission for committees;
 - ARCS Update Committee — illustrated the passive role that IDEA could take in their work if internal materials were created around IDEA for them to disseminate; however, the committee was unable to identify what those passive roles might look like.
- Committees rely on other committees to either provide actionable IDEA practices, or suggest IDEA actions for the committee, rather than develop or practice IDEA within their own *charge* and activities.
 - Virtual Connections Committee — expressed they would want guidance from the IDEA Task Force as well as prefer that members drive topics of conversation but feel challenged by the lack of participation;
 - Nominations Committee — expressed that the IDEA Task Force was formed to simultaneously review and continue to work on IDEA within the organization

without providing any definitions, methodological framework, or training to the members.

End Committee Meetings and Individual Interviews

4. Recommendations

The recommendations outlined below are guided by over a year of research into the internal structures of ARCS as an organization. The evidence and findings to support these recommendations can be found in the previous portions of this report: Section 3: Documentation Review, Stakeholder Surveys, and Committee Meetings and Individual Interviews. Please refer to these sections for the justification of these recommendations.

Short-term recommendations (needs immediate action)

- Executive leadership within ARCS (i.e., Board/ Executive Committee) should define what Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility means within the organization. Consistent and clear messaging from leadership regarding these definitions and ideals is essential. Stakeholders' perceptions and experiences with ARCS' commitment to IDEA work are weakened by ineffective and inconsistent attempts at creating a culture rooted in IDEA values.
- Prepare and budget for continuous IDEA training; training should be provided to all members who serve in any committee or board capacity.
 - Budgets for training resources should be collaboratively set and defined each fiscal year and/or investment efforts created to meet these needs.
 - Training should also be offered to the general membership to meet ARCS' goals for integrated IDEA practices within the organization.
- Executive leadership within ARCS should develop structures of accountability within the organization for implementing IDEA principles.
 - Decide what governing component of ARCS will hold committees and executive leadership responsible and accountable for incorporating IDEA into their work.
 - Decide what metrics will be put in place for committees and executive leadership to successfully integrate IDEA.
 - Decide how the governing component will respond should a committee or executive leadership not meet these metrics.
- In order to create actionable change, executive leadership within ARCS should fully commit to this work with their time, leadership, and resources. This includes:
 - Developing opportunities to solicit member and committee review of Board practices and commitments to IDEA in order to hold executive leadership accountable.
 - Leadership should communicate ARCS' dedication to this work and what steps they are taking to properly implement it within the organization to all stakeholders.
- Follow up with membership and the AAPI community regarding the statement ARCS released in March 2021 to confirm or continue actions set out by the statement for ARCS to meet:
 - "To our Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) colleagues: we hear you. We want to be there for you, and we are trying to figure out how we can. We promise to continue our efforts to reflect upon ourselves, both as an organization but also

as individuals, to better protect and uplift you. We are thinking of you as we continue our education process. We know that statements are only words, and that our actions will speak louder. Please hold us accountable to our actions to make sure we are being true to our words.”

Medium-term recommendations

After proper IDEA training

- Executive leadership within ARCS should evaluate how IDEA principles can be integrated and utilized by leadership and ARCS representatives under the canopy of public communications. ARCS leadership and communication stakeholders should define and recognize the following words and phrases for the organization:
 - White Supremacy
 - Domestic Terrorism
 - Colonialism
 - Imperialism
 - Hate Crime
 - Racially motivated violence and/or aggression
 - Perpetuation of systemic oppression
- Host programming regarding pressing social and political issues in both publicly accessible non-members and member events. Topics include but are not limited to:
 - Repatriation
 - Decolonizing collections
 - Provenance research
 - Microaggressions in the workplace
 - Responsibility of registrars and collections specialists regarding these topics
- Encourage and require inclusive language throughout the organization in programming, committee actions and meetings.
- Executive leadership within ARCS should define creative and intentional ways to integrate more accessible practices into programming and communication to diversify member and non-member engagement.
- Ensure future ARCS surveys include IDEA questions and statements to continue to gauge stakeholder experiences and perspectives. For reference regarding specific questions, please refer to the IDEA Survey from June 2021.
- Consistently re-evaluate existing structures within ARCS for barriers to IDEA work and principles. This type of internal review should not be a one-time occurrence and there should be policy updates as it pertains to IDEA.
 - This should be done by both individuals of the organization and by external professionals, trained in the formal review of integrated DEAI practices.
- Create organizational guidelines and expectations around recognizing and being sensitive to a variety of equitable practices, such as:
 - Land acknowledgements
 - Closed captioning
 - Statement policies

Long-term recommendations

- Host caucus sessions similar to the ones facilitated by IDEA Task Force Members at the 2021 Conference. These informal conversations with general membership will continue to build trust and dialogue around IDEA principles and offer opportunities for new perspectives and actions for IDEA to be developed.
- Host Town Halls accessible to members and non-members with the intent of offering the space to listen to interested and invested parties within the field and promote networks of support.
- Build relationships and partnering with networks and organizations outside of ARCS' current network, such as special interest or affinity groups. Avoid creating a climate of othering from limiting the network to current ARCS volunteers (committee chairs, committee members, Board, etc).
 - Consider posting all opportunities available within ARCS to different type of listservs or boards that are targeted to a variety of communities
 - Consider requiring certain metrics with potential candidates (i.e., a certain percentage of candidates must identify as BIPOC, women, etc.)
- As the nomination process for leadership positions within ARCS is self-selective, consider:
 - Is the environment welcoming to voices that are not a part of the dominant culture?
 - Has the structure that's been in place only elevating and allowing voices that are a part of the dominant culture?
 - Are we providing a platform for those that need it?
- Facilitate transparency and communication with membership by sharing operating procedures among the Board and in committees to support accountability such as:
 - Board nominations, committee member selection and voting processes.
 - Operational and financial information on the organization to membership during an open Annual Business meeting, as detailed in ARCS bylaws Section 3. Consider adding a business meeting to conferences.
 - A scope of responsibility for Talley Management Group.
- Prioritize intentional and widespread collaboration with CS-AAM to be a more collaborative and inclusive partnership that can strengthen the relationships between both organizations and the role ARCS can have in the professional stakes of members within the broader museum professionals community.
 - Increase support for the Mentorship, Professional Programming, and Global Initiatives committees
- Collect self-voluntary demographic data on race and ethnicity of general membership through membership renewal or registration cycles.
- Create a structure to have meaningful engagement with international communities to encourage greater membership.

End of Recommendations

5. Continuing Support

The IDEA Task Force feels it important to acknowledge the very real limitations of this report. While the research and work completed by IDEA Task Force members has been rooted in authenticity, confidentiality, and dedication to IDEA as both personal and professional values, none of the members serving are formally trained professions for assessing institutional practices of IDEA.

Centering IDEA work within ARCS is the responsibility of every single person involved with this organization and not solely work done by the Board or IDEA Task Force and subsequent IDEA Committee. Wrestling with internalized racism, sexism, classism, ageism, ableism, institutional biases, and systemic organizational oppression requires the time, space, and willingness to be uncomfortable, vulnerable, and empathetic. This work is both personal and professional and needs authenticity. Resilience work is IDEA work, and therefore requires the time and resources to ensure that committing to IDEA is financially and organizationally sustainable

The prioritization of IDEA work within ARCS will require a lot of work, and not solely work done by the Board or IDEA Committee. Fully embedding practice of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility is admirable but also unrealistic; these are values and actions that require active and intentional focus and initiative. It will be the responsibility of individuals to be authentic in this work on a personal and professional level: ARCS cannot control this. There is promising room for growth and justice in this work if ARCS and its members are willing to allow it.

End of Continuing Support