

Introduction

GlycoNet believes in the importance of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in part because it supports the short-term goals, as well as the long-term strategic objectives of GlycoNet and GlycoNet Integrated Services (GIS). Research clearly shows that deliberate incorporation of EDI strategies improves creativity, productivity, and financial outcomes, all of which will benefit GlycoNet, GIS, and their members/stakeholders.

GlycoNet and GIS recognizes that challenges remain in achieving the full participation of underrepresented groups (including women, racialized and ethnic minorities, Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, and LGBTQ2+ people) in scientific careers and is committed to identifying and overcoming barriers that may exist within its own hiring process, programs, peer-review system, and governing bodies. GlycoNet and GIS are committed to recognizing and reducing systemic barriers and mitigating biases of all kinds to develop an inclusive network of experts in glycomics research.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to reaffirm GlycoNet and GIS's commitment to EDI and to create and nurture a diverse and inclusive community.

Principles

This policy is in place to support the GlycoNet and GIS community in bringing to life principles of EDI and reflecting them back into daily interactions and decision-making activities. GlycoNet and GIS believe that EDI, and a sense of belonging, strengthens the community and enhances excellence, innovation, and creativity in all aspects.

Definitions

Tri-council Definitions:

- **Equity** is defined as the removal of systemic barriers and biases enabling all individuals to have equal opportunity to access and benefit from the program
 - To achieve this, all individuals who participate in the research ecosystem must develop a strong understanding of the systemic barriers faced by individuals from marginalized groups (e.g., women, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, racialized minorities, individuals from the LGBTQ2+ community) and put in place impactful measures to address these barriers
- **Diversity** is defined as differences in race, colour, place of origin, religion, immigrant and newcomer status, ethnic origin, ability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression and age
 - A diversity of perspectives and lived experiences is fundamental to achieving research and training excellence
- **Inclusion** is defined as the practice of ensuring that all individuals are valued and respected for their contributions and equally supported
 - Ensuring that all team members are integrated and supported is fundamental to achieving research and training excellence

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the GlycoNet and GIS community, including HQP, Network Investigators, staff, Board and Committee members, and all persons participating in GlycoNet and GIS activities (e.g., visitors, service providers, contractors, volunteers, etc.).

Policy

This policy conveys GlycoNet and GIS' commitment to:

- The principles of EDI
- The values of fairness and equitable treatment, inclusiveness, respect, integrity, honesty, and ethical behaviour
- The importance of a sense of belonging
- The importance of seeking balance between inclusive practices and healthy academic discourse
- Diversity as one of the foundations of excellence in teaching and learning, engagement, research, and discovery

Responsibilities

All members of the GlycoNet and GIS community share the responsibility for creating a supportive and inclusive environment. The community is accountable for:

- Fostering a culture that embraces EDI
- Acknowledging and addressing the biases, underlying beliefs and values, assumptions, and stereotypes that inhibit opportunity in work and learning environments
- Welcoming, embracing, and fostering positive, informed, and inclusive attitudes towards each other
- Providing environments that are free of discrimination and harassment and inclusive of all individuals
- Ensuring the inclusion of perspectives and voices of marginalized groups in decision making

Maintaining a Respectful and Encouraging Workplace

GlycoNet and GIS must maintain an open, respectful, and encouraging workplace. GlycoNet and GIS staff, HQP, and visitors should be treated with respect and dignity and should find the workplace to be welcoming, accepting, encouraging, and engaging. GlycoNet and GIS staff, HQP and visitors must not be denigrated, discriminated against, or embarrassed by their supervisors or by other staff, HQP or visitors. All members of the GlycoNet and GIS community are required to abide by the *GlycoNet Meeting and Conference Code of Conduct Policy* when conducting and/or attending GlycoNet meetings and conferences, whether held in public or private facilities.

Verbal abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, bullying abusive language, inappropriate personal comments, threats or threatening actions (including emails, web or social media postings), criminal behavior of any kind, denigrating acts of any kind or acts of violence of any kind, by or against any member of the GlycoNet and GIS Management Team, staff member, HQP, or visitor will not be tolerated and must be addressed immediately and appropriately by a responsible GlycoNet representative or, if necessary, an external body (security, police or an appropriate institutional body).

Failure of GlycoNet and/or a GIS Node to maintain a respectful and encouraging workplace would be considered a violation of the guidelines. Such a violation could lead to: 1) corrective training or action in conjunction with host institution policies, 2) a disciplinary hearing with GlycoNet Management, or 3) a recommendation by Management to terminate the Node's participation in GlycoNet to GlycoNet's Board of Directors in compliance with agreements with the Node's host institution.

Encouraging Diversity in the Workplace

GlycoNet's and GIS' staff and HQP recruitment process should be accepting of all individuals regardless of their gender, race, ethnicity, religious background, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical or mental disabilities. The GlycoNet Office and GIS Nodes should show a reasonable balance of gender and ethnicity, with an optimal target reflecting the ethnic composition of the general Canadian or local university population.

GIS Node Leaders should be proactive in maintaining a diverse and supportive lab environment by integrating EDI initiatives into their regular lab activities. Lab members should be encouraged to attend events associated with the local institution's EDI week/day, and to attend forums to discuss EDI and propose solutions for alleviating barriers that exist at their institution. During lab meetings, Node Leaders should promote EDI materials that are made available through tri-council initiatives (e.g., bias in peer review). Node Leaders should be aware of their institution's human resources department EDI resources and policies that encourage a culture of inclusivity and acceptance in their labs.

GlycoNet offers Diversity and Inclusion training to all members of the GlycoNet and GIS community free of charge. The "Diversity and Inclusion Bootcamp" course is offered by the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion and includes two modules in both English and French: "Unconscious Bias" and "Diversity and Inclusion Fundamentals". Additionally, all Committee members reviewing applications are required to undergo the "[Bias in Peer Review](#)" training hosted by NSERC. GlycoNet Board members also undergo annual EDI training.

Compliance

Demonstrating commitment and action toward a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive community requires reflection and active learning. As such, application of this policy will focus on providing the education, resources, and support to meet the accountabilities as outlined. All members of the GlycoNet and GIS community are expected to understand EDI and are responsible for the implementation of such within their scope of influence and authority.

GlycoNet/GIS and its community are required to comply with all relevant legislation related to human rights and employment equity.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee

GlycoNet has an EDI Committee, which is an important vehicle of ensuring accountability and direction on an organization's commitment to addressing EDI (EDI definition in Appendix A). It is a basic building block toward developing a robust EDI Strategic Plan.

The EDI Committee can assist with identifying inequities, gaps in representation, and barriers to full participation within the various activities of the organization. It will also ensure, whenever possible, that GlycoNet and GIS are equal opportunity employers with a workplace that reflect the diversity of the Canadian population and provide equitable treatment to all members of the Network. The EDI Committee can assist in determining and implementing strategies to create a culture change, and welcoming, respectful, and inclusive working and learning environments.

The EDI Committee with appropriate authority/accountability, defined goals, monitoring and measurement tools will address internal challenges but also will position the organization to respond to external factors such as regulatory requirements, reputational issues.

The EDI Committee will ensure that the research programs in GlycoNet and GIS address problems that are of benefit to a diverse population and will help recognizing and eliminating bias in application.

EDI Committee Mandate

The EDI Committee is tasked with proposing, evaluating, and recommending initiatives to support the GlycoNet and GIS EDI program. These activities will include:

- Develop education and awareness programs
 - Make use of organizations like the Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion
 - Develop the framework for EDI within GlycoNet
- Set EDI policies and goals for GlycoNet, GIS, and their members
- Monitor and report to the Board of Directors quarterly on the successes and limitations in EDI within the network
 - Develop an assessment tool for the training the EDI Committee implements

Appendix A: GlycoNet EDI Committee Vision, Mission, and Goals

Vision Statement

Our vision is for GlycoNet to be an environment where all its diverse members can optimally contribute to research and professional activities to strengthen the research and innovation community and impact of GlycoNet research.

Mission Statement

Use data and literature-driven approaches to improve the participation and lived experiences of diverse GlycoNet members.

Values Statements and Guiding Principles

- Use Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) to drive innovation and excellence
- Take a scientific approach and integrate equity, diversity and inclusion into all processes of the Network
- Create an environment where all members feel valued and are open to others viewpoints
- Integrate, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion into the daily practices of the Network (Practice inclusivity daily)
- Recognition and reduction of system barriers and mitigation of any biases

SWOT Analysis

Internal Origin	Strengths Committed leadership Expertise in EDI area Diverse trainees	Weaknesses Resistance Lack of diversity in PIs/Committees Lack of education and communication
External Origin	Opportunities Ahead of curve (NCE and glycomics) Government initiatives	Threats Pandemics

Competitive Advantage/Benefits to the Organization

- Diversity drives innovation
- Valued members are more engaged and productive
- Inclusive employers attract more talent
- Potential for increased access to marginalized groups (e.g. Indigenous communities)

Long-Term Strategic Objectives

- Increase diversity at PI level
- Continue evolving educational activities
- Develop toolkit for incorporating EDI principles into daily lab environments

Short-Term Goals/Priorities

- Increase diversity at Committee level
- Make reporting mandatory to obtain funding and reimbursement for AGM/Symposium
- Workshop engagement strategies
- Deliver educational activities to PIs (with a focus on why EDI is important/beneficial)
- Revisit code of conduct/ harassment policy
- Develop a framework that includes EDI considerations in research and training evaluation – such as support for research programs or training opportunities that address problems within the designated communities

Recommended Strategies to Obtain EDI Vision

- Develop an educational plan for the GlycoNet staff, Committee members and Board so that there is a clear understanding of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion among all levels and participants of the GlycoNet community
- Initiate a strategy for Hiring/Recruiting of candidates and appointments to ensure that EDI is considered
- Determine communication strategies and ways to share results and the impact of EDI across the GlycoNet network
- Determine measurement strategies and framework to demonstrate the impact of EDI
- Determine roles and responsibilities of parties within the GlycoNet framework related to EDI including BoD, Committees, Networks and Scientific Leaders, Researchers, Trainees and Administration

Action Items/Plans

- Communicate strategy to GlycoNet Board and subsequently to the GlycoNet community
- Identify strategies from similar organizations
- Start brainstorming educational activities
- Determine whether previous survey needs repeating for increased participation/additional information (see Scorecard/measurement framework)

Scorecard/Measurement Framework

- Started with the quantitative survey in 2018. Total response rate was 32.4%. Response rate was 41%, 24%, and 54% among PIs, trainees, and others (Board and Committee members and staff) respectively
- Evaluated gender, race, disability, indigeneity, and status in Canada
- Track diversity on Committees, in applicants/funded grants, in meeting speakers/participants
- Repeat survey as necessary; include questions on lived experiences as well as demographics

Critical Success Factors and Dependencies

- Adoption from network investigators
- Adoption from board and executive teams