DIVERSITY, GENDER EQUALITY AND FAMILY-FRIENDLY PRACTICES WITHIN CBNS

Purpose
A CBNS initiative, to outline measures for creating and maintaining diverse workplaces that promote family-friendly practices, gender equality and diversity, as supported by the Centre's Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Examples of Centre-led initiatives include the carer's support fund, student travel award, part-time appointments for academic and professional staff etc.

DIVERSITY
Diverse workplaces have employees from a variety of diverse backgrounds. Examples of diversity may be but are not limited to, religious and political beliefs, gender, ethnicity, education, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation and geographic location. Unconscious bias in recruitment, retention and promotion may prevent particular groups of people from joining or staying at CBNS. We need to consider how we can recruit and create a positive environment for all our members to ensure that CBNS remains a diverse workplace.

Tips for creating a diverse workplace
- Ensure that your members are aware of the "Discrimination and Unacceptable Behaviour" policies at your node. Include links to the website in induction packs.
- Include a discussion on diversity as part of your node meetings, highlighting the benefits of having a diverse and inclusive workplace.
- Identify and address any unconscious bias in recruitment, retention and promotion that may be preventing particular groups of people from joining or staying at your workplace.
- Do not overlook individual skills that CBNS members bring to the workplace, language skills and international experience that may help to initiate and develop collaboration. It may be useful to include these skills as non-essential selection criteria in job applications.
- Be mindful of different cultural practices and make workplace adjustments where appropriate.
- Create events within your group that promote inclusion, i.e. team building events or lunches for the participation of everyone.
- Add wording on job advertisements that promote inclusion, such as, "*The opportunity to work in a culturally rich environment.*" (Sourced from the University of Melbourne).
- Celebrate the achievements of CBNS members, of all backgrounds.
- Develop and encourage training for staff that aims to foster diversity, e.g. Mindfulness to reduce prejudice bias.
- Provide opportunities for ECRs and students to acquire leadership experience in research development and planning

Key Performance Indicator
By 2020, there will be at least 35 ECRS and students holding leadership roles within the Centre (e.g. co-leaders on research projects, committee representatives, members of boards etc.).

GENDER EQUALITY PRACTICES WITHIN THE WORKPLACE

Within universities, the representation of women falls off during the transition from PhD to Postdoctoral Fellow to Laboratory Head reflecting the challenges experienced by women to progress in their careers. The same trend is reflected in the staff profile of the CBNS with 63 % of higher tier positions, and 77 % of all positions, being held by men. Therefore, the policy put forward in this documentation focuses on employing and retaining women in CBNS, by creating workplace practices that create equal opportunities for all genders. It is important that CBNS gender equality practices do not disadvantage staff from all genders.

Mentoring

Introducing the mentoring program for early career female researchers may help to address the under-representation of female researchers in senior academic positions. To maintain balance CBNS mentorships should target equal representation of gender.

Women as primary carers

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 2015-16, 95% of primary parental leave used by non-public sector employees was taken by women. Staff may have a period of reduced productivity around maternity leave, which can impact their transition from PhD to postdoctoral fellow and further. The decision to return to work after having children has its challenges, and primary carers often have to choose between their career and raising their children. Choosing a bigger role in parenting will usually stall or hinder a primary carer's career trajectory. Further, primary carers with pre-school-age children may struggle to participate in meetings, conferences, peer-review committees and other academic activities due to their caring commitments. In addition to **Gender Equality Practices** see also **Work and Family Best Practice.**

Tips to foster equality

Job creation and application
- Where allowable from the pool of applicants, have 50% male/female candidates in interviews.
- Ensure that jobs encourage females to apply.
- Ensure that there is gender pay equity.
- Identify and address any unconscious bias in recruitment, retention and promotion that may be preventing staff from both genders from joining or staying at your workplace.
- Consider promoting available job openings directly to women (adhere to selection procedures).

Provisions for childbearing/childrearing
- Assist parents with young children, provide maternity leave cover and contract extensions.
- Schedule meetings and workshops with parents in mind (10 am – 4 pm).
- Ensure that there is workplace flexibility for staff with family commitments.

Job progression and leadership
- Develop leadership training and mentoring, and encourage equal gender participation.
- Facilitate the creation of female-specific fellowships.
- Create "Champions for Women" to encourage women to seek leadership roles.
- Celebrate the achievements of female CBNS members.
- Ensure the equal representation of genders as speakers or chairs at meetings/symposia.
- Invite women as visiting scientists so that both genders are equally represented.
- Organise special lectures to showcase the performance of female scientists within CBNS.

Key performance indicators

By the year 2020 at least 80% of Centre-organised meetings will have gender balance amongst organising committees, speakers and participants. Further, the Centre's mentoring programs will have 50% participation of women.

WORK AND FAMILY BEST PRACTICE

To recognise that many of our staff have carer responsibilities and to allow for a balance between work and family by introducing family-friendly workplace policies and practices. This document explains best practice for achieving a family-friendly workplace within CBNS. We have consulted the website FairWork Ombudsman for best practices. Flexible working arrangements (FWA) should be in writing, explain what changes are being asked for and explain the reasons for the request. A request for flexible working arrangements can only be refused on reasonable business grounds, and negotiations should reach an arrangement that balances the needs of the employer and employee.

Flexible working arrangements

According to the FairWork Ombudsman employees may request FWA if they:

- Are the parent, or have responsibility for the care, of a child who is of school age or younger.
- Are a carer (within the meaning of the carer recognition act 2010).
- Have a disability.
- Are 55 or older.
- Are experiencing violence from a member of their family.
- Provide care or support to a member of their immediate family or household, who requires care or support because they are experiencing violence from their family.

Tips for creating a family-friendly workplace

Initiatives

- Develop a carer's support initiative at your node.
- Highlight family-friendly practices.
- Conduct regular reviews of existing family-friendly provisions.

Negotiating working hours and logistics

- Allow flexibility in working hours, or negotiate RDOs (not all universities allow RDOs).
- Allow staff to work additional hours to make up for the time taken off.
- Create part-time work opportunities.
- Allow job sharing or renegotiations to part-time working arrangements.
- Facilitate telecommuting or home-based work.
- Encourage staff to take their time in-lieu.
- Schedule meetings and workshops with parents in mind (10 am – 4 pm).

Job Creation

- Determine if new positions may also be offered part-time or job share.
- For part-time research jobs, you may consider employing both a researcher and a research assistant to fulfil the requirements of the job.
- Use wording in job advertisements that promote a Family-Friendly Workplace (examples below).

Facilities

- Enable children to access the workplace, where safe.
- Advise staff of the available child-care or parenting rooms on-site or nearby.

Example of potential wording to add to position descriptions:

"Flexible family-friendly policies, providing generous leave and working conditions." (Sourced from the University of Melbourne)

KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

By 2020, 80% of all meetings and workshops, facilitated by the Centre, that enable attendance by members with dependents (e.g. 10am-4pm programs, hiring family-friendly venues to accommodate travel with dependents etc.).

Gender equity and diversity	2018	2019	2020
Number of Centre-led initiatives that promote gender equity, diversity and a family-friendly workplace (e.g. carer's support fund, student travel award, part-time appointments for academic and professional staff etc.).	3	4	5
% meetings and workshops facilitated by the Centre that enable attendance by members with dependents (e.g. 10am-4pm programs, hiring family-friendly venues to accommodate travel with dependents etc.).	50%	70%	80%
% Centre-organised meetings with gender balance amongst organising committees, speakers and participants.	60%	70%	80%
% of women in mentoring program.	50%	50%	50%
Number of ECRS and students holding leadership roles committee representatives, members of boards etc.).	25	30	35

Table 1: Annual Key Performance Indicators for ARC Centre of Excellence for Convergent Bio-Nano Science and Technology