



Fair Recognition Working Group

OiS Fair Recognition Best Practices Series #1 Understanding the Problem







OiS Fair Recognition Best Practices Series: #1 Understanding the Problem

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February 2022

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About the Organization and the Authors

Women of Color Advancing Peace, Security, and Conflict Transformation (WCAPS) is a platform devoted to women of color that cultivates a strong voice and network for its members while encouraging dialogue and strategies for engaging in policy discussions on an international scale. Through our dedication to mentorship and partnerships and our passion for changing the global community landscape, we remain committed to achieving our vision of advancing the leadership and professional development of women of color in the fields of international peace, security, and conflict transformation.

Organizations and individuals who are signatories to the WCAPS <u>United States or United Kingdom Standing Together Against Racism and Discrimination Statements.</u> Our mission is to combat racist beliefs, attitudes, and acts of discrimination, and integrate diversity within all levels of our organizations and as individuals in the peace and security, foreign policy and national security fields. We are evaluating the current state of affairs, educating, elevating and supporting diverse voices and perspectives and the individuals who hold them, giving due recognition and credit to achievements of Black people and people of color, and creating a world where all people are treated fairly, equitably, and with respect.

The core commitment of OiS' Fair Recognition Working Group is to acknowledge the contributions of Black people and people of color and credit their work in the fields of international peace and security.



Authors

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Special thanks to: <u>Maher Akremi</u>, <u>Julia Canney</u>, <u>Mark M. Seaman</u>, and <u>Jennifer Smyser</u> for their support and extensive feedback and contributions. Additional thanks to those who granted interviews anonymously and participated in the survey.



Aims

This guide is designed to help organizations consider how to implement fair recognition practices. It provides information on key issues to be considered, including terminology and why it matters, as well as how fair recognition may be defined and the benefits it brings.

It also provides best practice ideas to be explored, rather than step-by-step guidance on developing processes, particularly since Organizations in Solidarity (OiS) members make up a diverse set of organizations, of different sizes, with access to different resources, and based in different countries. Therefore, any practical processes will have to be developed by each of the organizations, bearing in mind their own structure and resources. It is recommended that organizations work with human resources professionals and take employment law into account as relevant to the country in which they are based.

Terminology: Why the Language We Use Matters

The language and terminology we use matters. Certain language can preserve inequality and the structures of privilege that exist in society. As language evolves it is important to be willing to adapt so we use language that is respectful and also to be mindful of individuals' personal preferences of how they want to be identified.¹ It is important to understand the meaning behind the language we use when addressing one another, as certain terminology has been used in the past for oppressive or derogatory purposes. The context of conversations matters; what words, phrases, and acronyms are appropriate will change as language changes and evolve depending on the environment.² Although talking about ethnicity, racism, and discrimination can be difficult, and often these conversations are avoided—because of fear of using the wrong language, risk of upsetting someone, or general discomfort—it is important to not avoid having these conversations, as they are an important part in the fight against inequality. Having open conversations in a safe space, particularly around issues of recognition and visibility when it comes to race, is beneficial, as these conversations have the potential to help people connect over lived experiences and gain a shared understanding regarding the vast historical contexts of race and its current-day impacts.³

³ "How to Talk about Race at Work." Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/relations/diversity/conversations-race-work#gref.



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¹ "A Guide to Race and Ethnicity Terminology and Language." The Law Society, https://www.lawsociety.org.uk/en/topics/ethnic-minority-lawyers/a-guide-to-race-and-ethnicity-terminology-and-language.

² Ibid.

Race and Structural Racism: The Link with Fair Recognition

Race is a term of categorization used to describe a group of people who share similar physical characteristics, for example skin color. It is widely acknowledged that race is a social construct.⁴ Over the course of history, race has been used as a means to justify social exclusion, discrimination, and violence toward some groups.⁵ Racial prejudices have led to social privileges for members of some groups at the expense of others, therefore it is important to understand how the concept of race has created social structures that affect society today.

The term "structural racism" draws out the distinction that racism is more than a set of privately held individual prejudices—it is also something that is created and replicated by the rules, distribution of power, practices, and laws held and implemented across government, the economic system, and in cultural and societal norms.⁶ In simple terms, the structures and institutions that exist in society have an effect on the opportunities, well-being, and lives of Black people and people of color, quite often to their disadvantage. For example, stop-and-search powers that discriminate against particular groups.⁷ These pervasive structures manifest in a variety of ways and settings that can make fair recognition harder, particularly within the workplace, where certain organizational practices might unintentionally reinforce these systems.

If we want to achieve meaningful change around issues of fair recognition, we all need to be willing to continue to learn and change our behavior and attitudes at both individual and organizational levels. Organizations particularly have a critical role to play here, as their decision makers have the ability to lead the change in shifting the balance away from unfair practices toward more-equitable ones.

⁷ Vini Lander, "Structural Racism: What it is and How it Works." The Conversation, June 30, 2021, https://theconversation.com/structural-racism-what-it-is-and-how-it-works-158822.



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⁴ "Historical Foundations of Race." The Smithsonian, https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/historical-foundations-race.

⁵ For example, South Africa's system of apartheid, which institutionalized the social, political, and economic dominance of the country's white-minority population.

⁶ Zinzi D. Bailey, Justin M. Feldman, Mary T. Bassett, "How Structural Racism Works - Racist Policies as a Root Cause of U.S. Racial Health Inequities," *New England Journal of Medicine*, February 25, 2021, https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMms2025396.

What Is Fair Recognition?

Fair recognition at work means building a culture in which everyone's contributions are recognized and appreciated in a timely manner. Recognition can range from simply acknowledging a good idea in a meeting to formally promoting a staff member who provides outstanding work.

In the peace and security sector, all too often recognition only goes to those who have outward-facing roles, such as writing reports or speaking at events. This can lead to a workplace culture where those roles are perceived as more valuable to the organization, unfairly leaving out behind-the-scenes team members who contribute equally to the mission, vision, and values of the organization but who are not in the spotlight. This leads to disengagement and dissatisfaction among those whose efforts aren't recognized.

Transparency about the criteria for recognition, clarity about when recognition will take place, and consistency in recognizing hard work and strong achievements are necessary to ensure that everyone on the team feels that their work is valued equally and that they have a chance to be recognized and thanked for their efforts. Managers and leaders must understand what someone needs to achieve in order to qualify for formal recognition. When recognizing someone's work, it is important to be specific about the achievement or effort so the recognition comes across as genuine.

Not all recognition has to be formal. Building a culture of recognition in your organization can have a big impact on team cohesion and happiness. Making it a habit to say thank you to a colleague for helping out with something or recognizing that someone organized a great event ensures that the recognition is shared with the team, happens close to when the achievement and contribution took place, and helps build a positive culture of appreciation and gratitude across the team. However, this should not be used as a replacement for fair recognition through promotion and remuneration.



In a survey of 39 participants at an Organizations in Solidarity meeting, participants responded in the following ways to the question "How are your contributions in your field most regularly recognized?" The themes are ordered by frequency in which they appeared.

- Informal "thank you" in private or in team meetings
- Citations
- Invitations to speak, solo or on panels
- Writing opportunities
- Being referred to for advice
- Social media followers
- Awards
- Being highly spoken of
- Being named in lists of experts

Table 1 Source: Survey by OiS Working Group 8: Fair Recognition of all OiS members in attendance on 17 June 2021.

Why Might Fair Recognition Not Happen?

Recognizing colleagues for their efforts sounds great—so what might stand in the way of building such a culture in your workplace? If there is a culture of competition for publications, grants, bonuses, or income generation, it might create an incentive for managers and colleagues alike to consciously or subconsciously claim others' good ideas or work as their own. In a stretched team, managers may be too busy and overlook thanking others for their good work. Some managers may also feel the employees who report to them contribute primarily to the manager's success and not recognize the individual's effort.

This in turn makes it more likely that staff feel unappreciated, especially when they are working hard and under pressure, which can lead to burnout or staff leaving. There may also be embedded structural discrimination issues at play. Those who are not in roles whose contribution to the organization is publicly visible may not receive promotions or pay raises as often and can fall behind colleagues who otherwise provide the same quantity and quality of work.



"What do you see as the biggest challenge for fair recognition in your organization?" (44 responses, ordered by frequency.)

- The pace of project work and people's workload: little headspace for anything else
- Funding/resources available for anything other than project work
- Accepting that there is an issue in the first place
- Leadership supporting the status quo
- Slow turnover and staff set in their ways
- Small organization means fewer resources for organizational change and development
- Quantifying barriers to fair recognition
- The wider field supports status quo and makes changes in a single organization difficult
- Strict hierarchies with leadership out of touch or not interested in change
- Myth of meritocracy
- Too much reliance on personal networks/networks can be closed off to some, especially people of color
- Not sure where to start

Table 2 Source: Survey by OiS Working Group 8: Fair Recognition of all OiS members in attendance on June 17, 2021.

As a society, unlearning our biases remains a work in progress. It is therefore easy for an organization to have a culture in which the contributions of people of color and other marginalized groups are overlooked whereas the contributions of those from white staff are celebrated. Finally, a simple reason for inconsistent or absent recognition practices might be that there is a lack of awareness around how to do it right, or how to do it better.

Unfair recognition may be different based on the context that you are working in. We have included examples of some practices you may not even realize are present in your organization that are perpetuating unfair recognition practices.

In nongovernmental organizations, unfair recognition can come in the form of (1) organizations not including budgetary line items for teams that work on gender, inclusion, or accessibility, (2) expecting teams that work on gender, inclusion, or accessibility to be "grateful" that they are being asked to weigh in on proposal projects, (3) expecting Black, Brown, and Indigenous team members to contribute to diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) conversations for free and/or in addition to their regular programmatic work.

The typical progression in academic careers may lead to different issues of unfair recognition. One space in which unfairness can occur is in the requirements for tenure. According to a recent report from the American Council on Education, women faculty spend more time on teaching and service, and less time on research, than men, while white faculty spend less time promoting



diversity and mentoring students than faculty of other racial groups.⁸ As granting tenure at many institutions depends primarily on the track record of published research, women faculty and faculty of color become less likely to receive tenure. Changing the requirements for tenure, as well as in hiring and other steps of the career ladder, to equally reward all the work academics contribute to, whether in teaching, research, outreach, committee positions, or elsewhere, can make practices by academic institutions more fair to their employees.

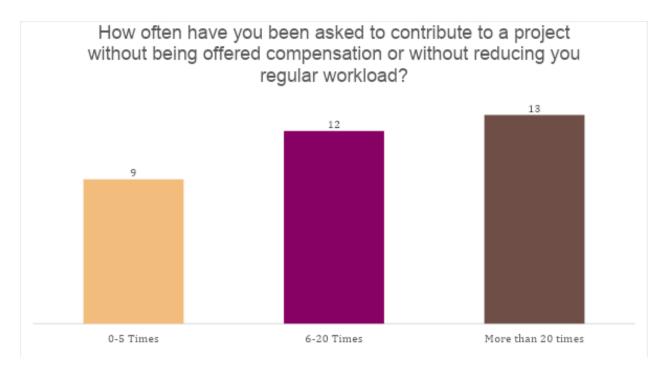


Table 3 Survey by OiS Working Group 8: Fair Recognition of all OiS members in attendance on 17 June 2021.

⁸ Kerryanne O'Meara, Dawn Culpepper, Joya Misra, Audrey Jaeger, "Equity-minded Faculty Workloads: What We Can and Should Do Now." American Council on Education, https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Equity-Minded-Faculty-Workloads.pdf.



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Benefits of Fair Recognition

Benefits of fair recognition are vast. In addition to reducing poverty and structural inequities, fair recognition can foster a culture of inclusion and offer many benefits to individual organizations in the peace and security field. There is also evidence that equal pay helps recruit and retain the best talent, meaning your employees will be more productive and you will spend less time retraining employees due to turnover. Beqom, a compensation-management firm with offices in North America and Europe, surveyed 1,600 enterprise employees in the United States and the United Kingdom and found that 37 percent of respondents would "seek a job at a company that disclosed a lower gender pay gap than that of their current employer."

On the other hand, at the macro level, the United Nations states that pay inequities compounded over years lead to greater poverty among women, and particularly women of color. Women face obstacles when required to disclose their previous salary and years of experience because in general, women are already paid less, and it takes them more years to advance to the same position as a man.¹¹

According to Payscale.com, which administers the largest crowd-sourced survey in the United States, overall, Black women make 76 cents for every dollar a white man makes, indicating that Black women tend to work in lower-paying occupations and/or advance less frequently. Even when they have the same qualifications, Black women earn only about 97 cents of every dollar white men earn.

On a practical level, based on the jurisdiction in which your organization operates, you may already be required to abide by equal pay and antidiscrimination laws. Remaining in compliance with local law will protect you from employee and/or governmental lawsuits and penalties.

¹³ *Ibid.*; "Gender Pay Gap Methodology." Payscale.com, https://www.payscale.com/about/methodology.



⁹ "The Gender Pay Gap: What Your Employees Really Think." Begom.

https://www.begom.com/gender-pay-gap-what-your-employees-really-think-survey-report.

¹⁰ "Explainer: Everything You Need to Know About Pushing for Equal Pay." UN Women, September 19, 2020,

https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/9/explainer-everything-you-need-to-know-about-equal-pay.

¹¹ Marie-Thérèse Chicha, "A Comparative Analysis of Promoting Pay Equity: Models and Impacts." International Labour Office, September 2006,

https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/@ed_norm/@declaration/documents/publication/wcms_dec l_wp_27_en.pdf.

¹² Amy Stewart, "Black Women Deserve Equal Pay." Payscale.com, August 13, 2020, https://www.payscale.com/compensation-today/2020/08/black-women-equal-pay-2020.

Laying the Foundations

Before implementing best practices processes, it is important that organizations understand what may be happening in terms of structural or cultural barriers to fair recognition at work. This could help with developing fair recognition practices that address areas of concern. For this reason, it is recommended that you:

- Survey your staff on job satisfaction, including specific questions on fair recognition.
- Conduct a self-analysis of pay and advancement disparities in your organization. By understanding the problem, you can take action to improve.
- Collect data on workforce ethnicity, on a voluntary basis, and vis-a-vis different levels and roles within the organization (e.g., junior versus senior roles, administration versus management).
- Establish a process to monitor career progression and pay increases—who's getting promoted and pay raises, and how frequently; who's being left behind and why—is it because of poor performance, or are there racial discrepancies?

Consider making pay and advancement opportunities at your organization more transparent so that staff understand why promotions and raises happen and how they can qualify. Perform regular written and face-to-face staff performance appraisals, and recognize employees for their achievements. Some organizations that do not have core funding and rely on grant income quite often do not have promotion and pay cycles that take into consideration work that staff may do that is unfunded, partly as a result of needing to assign or justify staff time to chargeable projects. For example, much work that is done on furthering diversity, equality, and inclusion goes unfunded and in some cases may not count toward the appraisal process. Organizations should reflect on the structure of their appraisal process and take into account the range of ways staff contribute to their workplace, with a view of having an appraisal process that is less of a box-ticking exercise.

Offer training on unconscious bias, focusing on helping people understand what they can do differently. This is important to all staff and crucial for those in leadership positions and who make decisions on promotions and pay raises. With research on unconscious bias training showing that on its own it does not lead to positive change, it is also advised that a process be

https://www.recruiter.com/i/prioritizing-the-pay-gap-ceos-who-want-to-win-the-war-for-talent-should-be-more-worried-about-salary-equity/.



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¹⁴ Matthew Kosinski, "Prioritizing the Pay Gap: CEOs Who Want to Win the War for Talent Should Be More Worried About Salary Equity." Recruiter.com,

implemented that encourages practical steps to ensure long-lasting change.¹⁵ Examples of practical actions include:

- Goal setting: regularly encouraging employees to set specific goals in relation to their behaviors.
- Perspective taking: encouraging employees to do "perspective exercises" by imagining what it might be like to walk in someone else's shoes. Perspective exercises can encourage empathy toward different groups and people.
- Providing regular sessions on unconscious bias training to reinforce awareness and help people to not forget what they've learned (by some accounts, attendance should be voluntary to avoid resentment).¹⁶
- Sharing information on the effects of bias and discrimination. This could include personal and anonymous experiences, external or internal to the organization, and could be done through regular human resources newsletters or emails to the staff.

Line managers should be trained to be aware of different personalities and consider offering praise privately, as some people may not appreciate public attention.

Identify positions that are vital and consider how to develop a succession-planning program for senior roles, ensuring that it takes into account diversity and existent talent within the organization. This could be done in tandem with the development of a mentorship program for junior level staff.

¹⁶ Ibid.; Alex Lindsey, Eden King, Ashley Membere, and Ho Kwan Cheung, "Two Types of Diversity Training That Really Work," *Harvard Business Review*, July 28, 2017, https://hbr.org/2017/07/two-types-of-diversity-training-that-really-work.



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¹⁵ David Robson, "What Unconscious Bias Training Gets Wrong... and How to Fix It." *The Guardian*, April 25, 2021,

https://www.theguardian.com/science/2021/apr/25/what-unconscious-bias-training-gets-wrong-and-how-to-fix-it; Fiona Young, If Unconscious Bias Training Doesn't Work, What's the Alternative?" Hive Learning, https://www.hivelearning.com/site/resource/diversity-inclusion/unconscious-bias-training/.

What Can Funders Do?

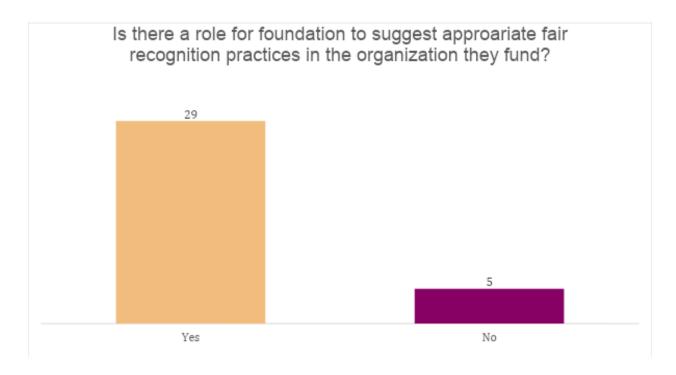


Table 4 Survey by OiS Working Group 8: Fair Recognition of all OiS members in attendance on 17 June 2021.

Private Foundations

Over the course of a year, the working group interviewed three private American foundations in the peace and security field for the purposes of this guide, and referenced the OiS' "Ask the Funders" event on October 6, 2021. The only consensus is that foundations are aware of and addressing the issue of fair recognition in different ways.

Challenges remain however. Because of the power dynamics in the grantor-grantee relationship, many grantees choose to only communicate with foundation program officers through explicit, high-ranking channels, such as the president, executive director, or principal investigator (PI). They actively discourage communication at the entry and middle levels, where most Black people, Indigenous people, and other people of color are employed. While high-level communication makes sense from a logistical perspective, it limits the opportunities for foundations to see and recognize those who are doing the work of the grant. Additionally, should organizations have problems with fair recognition and pay equity, they are generally loath to ask for help for fear of losing grant money. Also, many Pls and even executive directors reached



their leadership role not through management training and experience but because of their technical and organizational skills.

Recommendations for Foundations

Make diversity equity and inclusion a philanthropic goal: Foundations may be tasked
with funding peace and security issues, but DEI is at the core of the success of this
mission. While some private foundations may not be able to change the bylaws of their
organization, they should still find creative ways to promote DEI as a goal in itself. This
will grow a stronger, more-sustainable pipeline of talent and foster innovative ideas.

When sending out a request for proposals, include requirements not only for the final output but for the way it was produced. Foundations can even be explicit, such as stating they will not support events or work that does not include diverse representation. Foundations could also consider earmarking some of their grants explicitly for grantees from certain demographics.

- Facilitate more direct communication: Foundations are already seeking greater communication; grantees should reciprocate. Consider hosting "meet and greets" that allow program officers to engage with not only the executive director or the PI but the entire team. Foundations could also create "office hours" when more junior staff are encouraged to engage directly.
- Fund best practices: For those organizations that are too small to have their own human
 resources and compliance programs, foundations could seek to offer collective services
 through a professional third party provider. In addition, foundations should seek to
 support DEI training as well as management training. Foundations could also sponsor an
 ombudsman that could investigate and mediate DEI matters within the peace and
 security field as part of OiS.
- Build a culture of recognition in the field: There is currently a shortage of recognition, particularly external recognition, for those working in the peace and security field. The recognition opportunities that do exist are for late-career or quite specific contributions. Organizations should find ways to publicly recognize the excellent contributions across the field.
- Collect Data: Good sector-wide data on the demographics of who does the work of a
 grant and how much they are paid is needed to fully understand the challenges facing
 the field. Unfortunately, there is no uniform standard regarding position titles and
 compensation, and most grantees request anonymity on this data. Nonetheless,
 foundations should use their considerable leverage to incentivize organizations to be
 transparent with their data. Additionally, foundations could modify their grant reports to
 identify who provided the work in the format of "prepared and submitted by [author(s)]
 on behalf [organization or principal investigator]," which is common in Europe. Also, once



data is collected, foundations should meet to analyze and determine the best way forward.

Government Grantmakers

One government funder provided information for the purposes of this guide. The conversation with this funder highlighted the questions and processes government funders can start to ask related to diversity through their grant-making process. Government funders sometimes have less flexibility than foundations with regard to setting their mandate on areas of priority, as this is dictated by the current government, which sets policy priorities. Similar to private foundations, government funders are mindful of the grantor-grantee relationship and do not want to be accused of shoehorning a diversity issue into every agenda.

Additionally, both types of funders award grants to prominent organizations which nonetheless have structural inequalities which require changes to the way organizations operate. This degree of change requires a long-term commitment from funders which is not possible within the lifecycle of a single grant; it therefore requires a level of organizational commitment beyond what a funder might require on a specific issue to create meaningful, long-lasting change.

Start asking initial questions about DEI: Sometimes grant applications can be a valuable place to start gathering information about fair recognition as it can trigger organizations to begin considering these issues internally and reflect on their current practices and begin to identify areas for change. It also signals what governments may require in the future and gives well-meaning organizations time to prepare for future requirements.

Have conversations with your grantees: This ensures that there is transparency between the funder and the grantee about that is expected of the latter regarding project deliverables and how these need to be reported on. For example, what does providing sex-disaggregated data on the project mean in practice? It should move beyond naming names and just including women or POC in the room and be specific as to what a person's role is, whether their thoughts and knowledge have been incorporated and listened to, what steps the grantee has taken to ensure women and POC have access to the training, and how have they been involved in development of the program. Being open to providing some guidance to your grantee in areas where they might not have expertise is beneficial for both parties, particularly grantees, as it can clarify expectations of how they might need to integrate specific concerns (in the example above, gender) into a project and can take these learnings onto future projects.

Think through reporting mechanisms: Have purposeful reporting and monitoring frameworks for grantees that move beyond asking merely for descriptions of progress and challenges of a grant to date and instead opt for frameworks that ask more-specific questions. For example, using monitoring and evaluation frameworks such as results-based management that require



grantees to clearly explain project outcomes and what difference that outcome has made in the real world requires grantees to think a step beyond just delivering on output. These frameworks make grantees instead consider how they integrate specific issues into the whole project early on instead of it being an afterthought.

What more could be done?

While some fundamental questions are being asked through the grantmaking process, there are avenues for further steps on the part of funders and government grantees.

Government funders could consider sharing the success of how some of their grantees have run projects that successfully integrated diversity concerns into the project. This would require grantees agreeing to this information being made available; doing so would show other organizations what success looks like.

Grantees also have a responsibility to start to make and implement changes where possible before waiting for them to become expected by funders. Grantees should begin to think about equality considerations in general and seek to advance them across their organization and not just through funded project work. While this can be challenging for many organizations because of limited resources and a lack of funding, a number of small changes can be implemented that can help improve the working environment.



What Can Peace and Security Organizations Do?

- Join OiS for access to resources on improving DEI and attend regular meetings for tips and ideas.
- Make recognition a regular habit and part of the organization's culture.
- Highlight achievements at staff meetings. Encourage employees to recognize a coworker's contributions.
- Highlight achievements on a recognition wall and mention this at staff meetings or in internal channels.
- Encourage employees to nominate coworkers for recognition.
- Encourage employees who receive recognition to specifically acknowledge other coworkers who may have been part of the success.
- Create a recognition system where all roles, functions, and members of a team are recognized to ensure that recognition is not simply for those in roles whose value to the organization is already prominent.
- Think outside the box: if an organization cannot provide financial recognition, what can improve the employees' lived experience, like flexible hours, transportation, housing, child care, education, training, or health benefits?
- Consider transitioning to a transparent organizational ranking and pay-grade system.
- Ensure promotions, pay raises, and bonuses are transparent, data driven, and equitable across all roles.
 - Organizations should create a transparent promotion and pay raise policy by consulting with employees within the organization (including DEI affinity groups) to get their buy-in. Buy-in is critical because senior leadership may not understand the consequences to the lived experience of hourly workers or those with contracts or grants.
 - All employees should understand how and when they can earn a raise, promotion, or bonus.
- Incorporate development goals as part of line management responsibilities. Managers should:
 - Meet regularly with all employees under their supervision, not just the ones that are most outgoing.
 - Actively mentor, encourage, and advocate for their employees rather than just "supervise" their work.
 - Get to know their employees and look for opportunities for them to do what they are great at, not just what the organization thinks it needs.
 - Create opportunities for their employees to be exposed to senior leadership within their organization and the broader peace and security community.
 - Keep written records of an employee's performance, discuss it with them, and make a plan with them for their next pay raise or promotion.



Say thanks!

"In what ways do you wish your contributions were more recognized in the field?" (ordered by frequency in which they appeared)

- Pay bonuses
- Pay for overtime
- Budget increases
- Promotion and pay raises
- Job stability
- Awards from funders, grants
- Introduction to senior people to share ideas
- Additional responsibilities and opportunities, including into leadership roles
- Recognition for expertise outside of DEI
- Recognizing atypical contributions
- Recognition of emotional labor and need for self-care, additional time off
- Being able to choose between opportunities rather than having opportunities imposed

Table 5 Survey by OiS Working Group 8: Fair Recognition of all OiS members in attendance on 17 June 2021.



Annex

[Web: downloadable CSV file of Survey by OiS Working Group 8: Fair Recognition of all OiS members in attendance on June 17, 2021]





