

SWOG Vice Chair for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Professional Integrity

Background

SWOG's mission is to improve the lives of people with cancer through clinical trials and translational research. We successfully fulfill this mission guided by our core values: prioritizing patients, encouraging diversity of leadership and members, demanding integrity and accountability of our researchers, and mentoring young investigators to ensure strong leadership and excellent clinical research for future generations.

The Hope Foundation and SWOG have recently launched a multi-phased, multi-year initiative to improve diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) among SWOG leadership and membership, and throughout its cancer studies. Multiple projects within this initiative are now ongoing and focus largely on trial recruitment and patient engagement. Furthermore, SWOG leadership is invested in the professional support of its researchers and recognizes our critical role in advocating for the safety and success of all members within our Group. SWOG is currently seeking a new Vice Chair position (up to 0.25FTE) to make diversity, equity, inclusion and professional integrity initiatives integral to the Group.

Summary of Role

SWOG is a cooperative research group with international scope that aims to improve the standards of cancer care and to better the lives of patients with cancer. The SWOG Vice Chair for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Professional Integrity [VCDEII] is seminal to this work. The selected candidate will have the opportunity to directly craft key DEI strategies and processes within a network of over 6,000 research sites and will be empowered to improve inclusion strategies for a 12,000+ member organization. SWOG's impact is substantial, and this role is integral to our success. To ensure capacity for real change, the VCDEII will report directly to the SWOG Group Chair, supported by all Group leadership to fulfill objectives. We expect the work to set standards across the NCTN in support of National Cancer Institute- support DEI initiatives.

We anticipate that the right candidate will bring their own expertise and strategies to our Group. As a new position, we hope to co-create the specificities of the job in a way that upholds best practice and builds on the individual's strengths and goals. More broadly, the VCDEII will provide oversight of all DEI initiatives at SWOG, including evaluative research on policy changes. SWOG will strongly support any research or publication interest in this field. The VC DEII will also hold an Ombudsperson position within the Group, acting as a neutral and confidential resource for SWOG membership.

The VCDEII will champion the importance and value of a diverse and inclusive working environment and will guide the development of a vision and effective strategy to create a culture for equity, diversity, inclusion and ethical behavior across leadership, including SWOG committees and subcommittees.

The VCDEII will work with Group stakeholders to assess potential barriers and recommend policy and systems change to recruit and retain a diverse Group leadership and membership.

The VCDEII will also assess and recommend policy and systems change for a neutral, impartial and confidential pathway to support both leadership and membership in upholding SWOG's values of integrity and accountability.

This will demand knowledge of cultural competency, gender differences, dis/ability, sexual harassment, and other topics designed to increase awareness and support of equity and inclusion network-wide.

Current State

As a Group, SWOG is focused on improving the accessibility and representativeness of our trials, the diversity of our membership, and the inclusivity of our operations. As a strong foundation upon which to build out this position, we offer:

- SWOG Data Management Center [SDMC] resources and statistical expertise on patient accrual and other metrics
- SWOG Operations Membership Department resources for collection of membership demographics and tracking
- Actionable data and suggestions from a Group-wide DEI maturity analysis by Pope Consulting, completed in 2021
- An expert Patient Advocate Committee and Recruitment and Retention Committee, well equipped at strategizing and thinking about this work
- A heralded Team Science Training Module for Increasing Diversity in Clinical Trials, supported by the NCI, industry and SWOG's Hope Foundation
- Resources from The Hope Foundation for Cancer Research, including funding of a DEI Fellow, NCORP Pilot Grants, applicable symposia and publications, and general commitment to move the work forward to greatest effect.
- Interest and investment from key industry partners
- A robust, highly productive group of Cancer Care Delivery Researchers who have conducted heralded, ground-breaking work on clinical trials access.

Duties & Responsibilities

1. Plans, guides, and advises Group Chair and executive officers on diversity, equity, and inclusion matters. Utilizing data collected by our statistical center and membership department, monitor SWOG programs designed to ensure fair and equitable treatment across SWOG activities.
2. Promotes Group commitment to a climate of equity, diversity, and inclusion through interaction with members and staff.
3. Develops and maintains an informal, impartial, confidential, and independent pathway for hearing leadership and membership concerns of professional behavioral misconduct and helps to develop a range of responsible options to resolve problems and facilitate discussion to identify the best outcomes.
4. Develops and educates SWOG leadership on inclusive practices, policies and operating procedures that inform key SWOG functions such as selection of committee and subcommittee leadership, identification, and support of study chairs, and creating intentional and fair opportunities for mentorships and growth of young investigators.
5. Provides strategic direction and best practice guidance for (staff developed) training and research initiatives on cultural competency, gender differences, disability, sexual harassment, building a climate of equity and inclusion.
6. Assess current policies regarding workplace behavior, updating and modernizing them. Create universal rules fitting in with those in members' local human resources departments.

Other Requirements

The work environment rapidly evolves, requiring continual upgrading of skills. Work is mostly sedentary and confined to an office or home-office setting. Some travel to SWOG meetings or professional trainings is required.

Qualifications

A research or health-professional doctoral degree or its equivalent (M.D., Ph.D., D.O.). Prior and demonstrable commitment to DEI efforts as well as experience with faculty-level management position strongly preferred.

Knowledge & Skills

Desirable knowledge:

- Strategy development and management principles and practices;
- Proven success in managing and leading teams
- Prior implicit bias training
- Current understanding of DEI initiatives at the local and national level
- Professional behavior and ethics best practices;
- Systems change knowledge
- Conflict resolution and mediation methods.

Desirable skills:

- Providing strategic leadership;
- Cultural competency;
- Collaboration and consensus building;
- Managing change and sensitive topics;
- Offering viable solutions for problem solving;
- Planning, supervising, improving, or evaluating programs, policies, and procedures;
- Analyzing and developing policies and procedures.