

New CO Task Force Recommendations to The Access Network

The New CO Task Force:

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Table of Contents:

Values and Principles	1
Proposed CO Roles	4
Need for Mentorship and Onboarding	5
The Network’s Capacity to Support New COs	6
Relationship between Responsibilities and Compensation	6
Sustainability of the Network	8
Recruitment Process	8
Application Process	9
The Selection Process	11
Summary	11
Process	12
Remaining Questions for Future Growth and Changes	13

Values and Principles

The following values were developed in a collaborative manner on the 2020 CO task force team, inspired by the original values developed at the 2019 Access retreat. Consensus on these values was reached by the CO task force team, with input from all members before this final representation was shared.

Principle	Description	Implementations*
Avoid Gatekeeping	Any barriers, either genuine or artificial, should be avoided as actively as possible for every step of the recruitment, application, and selection process. The process for recruiting, onboarding, and training new COs should be clearly communicated in accessible ways in this effort.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An open application that allows people outside of the network to apply for the CO position. 2. Avoiding “nepotism.” 3. Encourage diversity in age, experience, positionality, and identity in the CO role 4. Applications are “confidential” during the first round of selection (see “Selection Process”) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Applicant’s identities are revealed, acknowledged, and respected during the second round of selection. 5. Creating ~6-month CO mentor/mentee relationships to bring COs from outside the network up to speed <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Required for those outside the network, optional for those within
Diversity, equity,	The CO team should reflect	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage diversity in age, experience, positionality, and

inclusion, social justice (DEISJ)	the Network's values of diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice. A diverse CO team is necessary to have diverse ideas and experiences in order to support the various needs of the entire network. A diverse network needs diverse leadership.	<p>identity in the CO role</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Diversity of ideas that work towards the same goals, but in innovative new ways 3. Diversity of CO roles/responsibilities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Roles need to be adaptive according to resources b. Reflects the different needs of the Network and individual COs. 4. To avoid tokenization 5. A baseline of requirements for the CO position is set. If the baseline is met by many applicants, focus on how the applicant contributes to DEISJ.
Learning	COs should be supported through learning and mentoring within the CO team, especially if coming from outside the network. COs should be prepared to both learn, and teach, skills and responsibilities while in a CO role.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CO mentor/mentee relationships 2. Multiple CO roles to reflect the different needs, activities, and people in the Network <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. This can be, but not exclusive to, varying time commitments, varied skills being used. 3. The non-tiered system: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. CO roles are allocated based on the needs of the network b. We recommend distinct formalized roles, but avoid "rank-ordering" these roles.
Supporting Individuals	<p>COs should be supported</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Financially, based on their workload, 2. Through mentorship 3. In easily entering and exiting a CO role, regardless of life/professional circumstances 4. With flexibility in scheduling, to accommodate COs in different life situations. 5. With community support for life circumstances 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compensation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Aim to compensate everyone that wants funding, and do so fairly for their time 2. Sensible (flexible based on the individual) workload <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conversations of expected and feasible workloads b. Workload expected should be communicated effectively in the application c. Applicant should express the workload they feel they can commit in hours 3. Support professional development by providing travel funding for conferences and networking. 4. Flexible scheduling <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Respecting people's needs without asking for explanations. Trust people and take it at face value 5. CO mentor/mentee relationships 6. Limiting the number of CO applications to read (N<20, see "The Selection Process, Zeroth Round/Initial Step) 7. Create an onboarding process which makes an easy to transition into a CO role 8. Create a formalized process for changes to CO involvement, and for discussing financial compensation

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. To remove the stress of starting difficult conversations, having spaces on a regularly recurring time scale (ex: 6 months) where all COs review their involvement is a healthy organizational practice. These reviews would be a place for COs to discuss leaving, increasing financial compensation, changing workload, etc. b. Be open to people having these conversations with the CO team in other ways as well, and outside of these reflection times. <p>9. Have a community offboarding practice as well</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. When COs leave, have a formal practice for recognizing their work for the network, and ways the network can continue to support them after they have left. b. Do not require explanations for leaving, trust people to know their own limits, while making space for hard conversations if need be.
Community & Democracy	<p>Selecting COs should be a community process based on discussion and collective deliberation.</p> <p>The application advertisement should make clear the various needs of the Network, and solicit the needs of the applicant, so the CO team can respond effectively to both sets of needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collective voting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. In an online conference call, current COs deliberate and vote for new COs b. Flexibility for COs unable to make calls (e.g. absentee voting and recorded zoom meetings) c. Allow time between deliberation and voting for people to individually reflect 2. Be aware of the needs of the Network <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Collect ideas and needs in an organized way, making it easier for each CO to review information need to make voting decisions

Proposed CO Roles

Our task force began by reacting to a tentative three-tiered CO structure proposed in a summary document from the 2019 CO Onboarding Retreat. From that starting point, our discussions moved us away from a hierarchical tiered structure, but we retained the idea of having different sets of responsibilities associated with different CO roles. Our discussions were informed by Chandra and Ben’s knowledge of the Access Network’s history with respect to the CO role and the circumstances under which people have moved into and out of those roles. Some of this history attuned us to the need for some flexibility in CO roles to meet people’s varied needs.

We also built from the five recommended responsibilities for COs (from the 2018 CO retreat report). We retain much of this language and structure in mapping out different CO roles. The

2018 retreat attendees reached consensus on these recommended responsibilities for COs CO.1-CO.5 which we have amended slightly through the proposed italicized text:

- (CO.1) Core Organizers are responsible for communication with the advisory board.
- (CO.2) Every CO will co-oversee some aspect of central network functioning within the two years of the grant. *Within each year, every CO should be involved in some student-facing mentoring work.*
- (CO.3) Every CO is responsible for participating in semi-regular communication with other network members.
- (CO.4) Every CO is responsible for engaging in conversations about mission, vision, & philosophy about the network.
- (CO.5) Every CO is responsible for engaging in self-education on anti-oppression in a way that they can describe to others.
- (CO.6) Core Organizers are responsible for mentoring within the CO team*

Building from this list of responsibilities, we propose the following three CO roles with specific responsibilities and default compensation in the table below. The compensation is intended as a starting point that could be revisited in individual circumstances if needed.

Core Organizer Role	Description
CO Intern	<p>Performs functions CO.3-CO.6, which is everything except overseeing a central aspect of network functioning and communicating with the advisory board. The CO-intern role is required for leaders without a prior history of engagement with local Access sites or the Access Network, but is available to all new COs to opt-into. Within CO.6, the CO-intern participates as the mentee. Has deciding powers equal to other COs during Zoom calls, email exchanges, and retreats.</p> <p>Default compensation (over 6-month period):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - \$480 (without Assembly/Retreat participation) - Reevaluated if CO Intern participates in the Assembly & CO Retreat
CO	<p>Performs functions (CO.1-CO.6). Within CO.6, the CO participates as the mentor, or as a co-mentor around an area of mutual collaborative learning. Has deciding powers equal to other COs during Zoom calls, email exchanges, and retreats.</p> <p>Default compensation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - In one's initial year as CO, paid \$1000 for each 6-month commitment. - Following one's initial year as CO, paid based on budget, responsibilities as a CO, and individual situation, as is the case for current COs.
Liaison CO	<p>Performs functions CO.5 and CO.3. CO.3 is met by attending CO Zoom calls every other week and being included on the CO email list. Has deciding powers equal to other COs during Zoom calls and email exchanges. Attendance at retreats and assemblies (which aim to achieve CO.4) is not required.</p>

Compensation: Varied. Typically this compensation is tied to an advisory board role on a grant, site-level employment, or senior personnel time budgeted in a grant.

This proposal is grounded in four main concerns: (1) the need for mentorship and on-boarding of new COs, especially those with less familiarity with Access, (2) the network's capacity to support new COs, (3) the relationship between responsibilities and compensation of COs, and (4) the sustainability of the network.

Need for Mentorship and Onboarding

A central theme for us in envisioning the CO team expansion was the level of familiarity that a prospective CO has with Access, and the ways in which they would continue to familiarize, learn and grow as Access COs. In our discussions, we made a distinction between prospective COs internal to Access, for example, those who have been a fellow, attended an Assembly, or been a site leader, and those coming from outside the network.

The proposed CO Intern position is an on-ramp for people hoping to gain great familiarity with the Access Network and the CO role. While there are several pathways to gain familiarity and involvement with Access for those already connected to an Access site, those opportunities are not readily available to someone unaffiliated with a site. We propose creating a "CO intern" role as an on-ramp for that purpose. As a lower commitment way to get involved in the leadership of Access, it would hopefully make it easier for people to apply in the first place. The CO Intern role would be required for newly selected COs not affiliated with an Access site. The CO Intern role would not be required for someone already connected to Access, though it would be a role available to any newly selected CO. A CO intern would be matched with a mentor on the CO team in order to learn about Access from a more experienced CO perspective. They would attend regular CO calls. They would be invited to attend CO retreats, but not required to participate.

The CO intern role is a manifestation of a more general principle that has emerged in our discussions: that learning and growing together should be a central responsibility of all COs. That work could look like the mentor-mentee relationship envisioned for CO interns, and also could involve mutual learning or co-mentorship between COs if both are seeking to improve in similar ways. Such flexibility in mentorship formats is especially important given the fact that established COs might not be equipped to be a mentor around some areas of growth, necessitating that new and experienced COs co-learn and co-mentor each other in some situations.

Lastly, we note that having a CO intern role and allocating CO responsibility towards mentorship in a structured way, will increase the collective workload of the CO team, and therefore will require additional time and/or additional COs to accomplish.

An example of involvement a CO intern could expect is jointly administering a particular aspect of the network (e.g. NF's, the Assembly, task forces, grant writing, etc) with a more experienced CO. The pair would work closely together to ensure both the success of the particular Access Network project and the professional growth in the CO intern.

The Network's Capacity to Support New COs

One of the big unknowns in creating a new CO process is the capacity Access will have to support new COs. We imagine that there are three possible resources that could end up being the limiting factor on the number of COs at any given time: the number of people who are interested in being a CO, the available funding for CO positions, and the availability of responsibilities that the CO team is expected to fulfill. At least at the moment, it seems that there are more responsibilities for COs to fulfill, and plenty of new ideas for COs to take on if possible. Therefore, the immediate limitations on the number of new COs will likely come from the number of people interested and the funding that is available. Given those limitations and that a formal process for expanding the CO team has not existed in the past, we propose thinking about the process on two scales: one that would be enacted in the near term, and another to function in the longer term. The longer term processes could be refinements or iterations on the near term processes we propose here. We primarily focused on developing near term processes, but describe considerations for longer term processes in the section "Unanswered Questions."

Relationship between Responsibilities and Compensation

Conversations about roles and responsibilities are usually tied to conversations about compensation. As noted above, the Network's capacity for new COs could be limited by its ability to provide appropriate compensation to all COs. Additionally, the appropriate level of compensation could depend not only on the particular roles and responsibilities associated with a CO, but perhaps also on their academic position, financial need (or privilege), life circumstances, and more. Balanced with all of these factors is a desire to be fair and transparent in compensation across the CO team. At the very least, appropriate compensation should be available for those COs that need it, including CO interns, especially if such support is a deciding factor in that person's ability to participate. We propose that our default operating procedure be that we pay all COs. However, we propose that a CO be given the flexibility to opt-out or decrease the default amount of pay (based on their circumstances). In such situations, we suggest thinking "outside the box" about compensation in other forms beside salary or stipend (e.g. travel support, etc). Money that ends up being unused for CO compensation will remain in the Access grant budget for future compensation needs.

We propose compensating the CO Intern for their time at a similar rate that we currently pay people participating on a task force (~\$20 / hour). In a 6-month period, we project that a CO Intern would spend 18 hours in CO meetings (~3 hours/month), and 6 hours managing various "homework" tasks and email correspondence (~1 hour/month). So we project that the base pay for CO Interns should be approximately \$480 for the 6-month period. Flexibility should be

possible in terms of the logistics of compensation, including both hourly and salary-based schemes, to accommodate the institutional constraints and affordances that different individuals experience. We suggest that the network consider increasing the level of compensation for the CO Intern if they participate in the Access Assembly and/or a CO retreat.

We project that new COs (not in an intern role) would be paid approximately \$1000 for each 6-month commitment. This increase in compensation (as compared to the CO Intern) would be due to taking on additional responsibilities for some aspect of core network functioning (e.g. co-mentoring an NF or AF team, co-facilitating a task force, co-mentoring the internal evaluation team, mentoring a documentation and dissemination project, etc). This level of compensation is commensurate with what Access has historically paid COs as consultants.

After an initial year-long term, COs compensation would vary based on the additional roles for which each CO is responsible. At this point, based on funds available to the Network, the CO team should renegotiate the distribution of CO responsibility and compensation in ways aligned, in spirit, with the “stone activity” that occurred at the 2018 CO retreat. These conversations should recur with some regularity, perhaps every 12 months.

We propose that there be a single application for both new COs and new CO interns (see the Application section below). For those who are selected and are coming from outside of Access, it is expected that they will be a CO-intern for a 6-month period. For those coming from inside Access, they can choose to start as a CO-intern or as a CO. Regardless of where they are coming from, for those starting as a CO-intern, the expectation is that they will move on to the CO role (or CO liaison role) after a 6-month period.

Sustainability of the Network

The Network should monitor COs stepping away from leadership responsibilities within the organization and expand the CO team as needed. We envision assessing the Network’s needs and soliciting new COs, especially those in intern roles, once every 6 months or so, in order to build capacity through mentorship. Ideally, the CO team would function in such a way that it prepares for the departure of current COs with new ones to further the organization’s work, provides ample opportunity for those interested in becoming COs, and retains enough COs as to maintain institutional memory and sufficient mentorship capacity for new COs. In our proposal, we urge the network to: (a) balance a desire to infuse new ideas into the Network with a desire to maintain some institutional memory, and (b) hold an openness to revising Network principles, without unintentionally drifting away from the Network’s core values. COs should also remember to document these discussions to aid in institutional memory.

As the leadership of the Access Network changes, we imagine that new ideas for Network activities will emerge. This will involve reevaluating what constitutes core functions of the network and will necessitate reassessing CO responsibilities. This could play out in a number of possible ways. For example, a new CO could arrive with a new idea to carry out and take that

on immediately. Or, the current CO team might identify a new idea but not have the bandwidth to implement it, and instead decide to publicize it as an opportunity for a new CO. Potential new COs might then be considered with that new responsibility in mind. The Network should be open to re-evaluating how well its suite of core activities are serving its goals.

Recruitment Process

It is important to be deliberate in how we get the word out about open CO positions. For this first round, we propose to start with a limited set of organizations (Access & SACNAS), though we aspire to reach out to more diverse professional organizations in the future (e.g. AAPT, APS, ABRCMS, ACS, etc). We recommend that prior experience with Access NOT be a requirement to become a CO; however, it should be considered in the application process. At different points in time, the Network should critically assess the CO cohort and decide how previous affiliation with Access should be weighted in considering applications.

For this first round, we recommend local advertisement at current sites (i.e. potentially through our network fellows, and local site web presences), the Access alumni email list (i.e., all past participants at Access Assembly, past network fellows, etc.) and the Access website's blog, as well as reaching out to affiliates of the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native American in STEM (SACNAS), ideally through listservs. We wanted to open up the application pool to those outside our organization to acknowledge that folks develop DEISJ expertise in many places and aim to bring in new perspectives and ideas. Due to SACNAS' commitment to diversity of both identity and field/discipline, they seemed an ideal choice. In the longer term, we hope that as more sites at MSIs join the network, there will also be more COs from those sites.

In this first round, we recommend heavily weighting affiliation with Access, and then secondarily affiliation with other DEIS external organizations (SACNAS, NSBE, etc.). We also decided that COs applicants who are accepted from colleges that do not have an official Access site would **NOT** be automatically given any preference in becoming a new Access site. The decision to add new sites is made through a distinct process depending on the network's resources available to support them, and other factors. **Clear communication of this is vital to opening up the application to those outside the organization.**

We recommend designating two points of contact for applicants to contact with their questions about the application. We recommend that these points of contact also be the same people chosen to view the applications before they are made confidential. As soon as possible, we recommend creating a "Who Are We" video to explain some of the FAQs of Access, particularly for those less embedded in our organization. This is also just a cute idea and would be nice for us to have. If the application pool is substantially large, or we gauge enough interest, we also discussed the future possibility of a "town hall" type zoom meeting(s) where anyone interested in applying could join to ask questions about Access and the CO role. We recommend that these materials, and the people serving as points of contact, specifically prompt potential applicants to think about who could write a letter of recommendation, and help them brainstorm

people they might not have thought of initially (e.g. peers they have co-organized with, or mentees).

Application Process

The task force aimed to make an application process that reflects our values. We want to create an application process that avoids gatekeeping, affirms our commitment to DEISJ, promotes learning, supports individuals, and values community and democracy.

The task force identified a range of factors that should be considered when deciding who should move into a CO role. In this context, we also discussed how these factors should be prioritized and the format that this information should be collected.

The factors we identified fit broadly into three (overlapping) categories: someone's current skills and past experience, their commitment to learning and growth, and the identities and corresponding perspectives that they bring to the table. We recommend paying particular attention to how each of these categories intersects with DEIS topics.

Regarding someone's past experience, we include both someone's experience regarding diversity/equity/inclusion/social justice (DEIS) work, and also their experience in STEM. Regarding their experience in DEIS work, we value work done within Access (including Access sites) and also work done independent of Access. To that end, we envision that future CO teams will include a substantial fraction of people with a history of involvement in Access, and also a subset of people without a history of Access involvement. The target numbers of people in these two categories will change based on the needs of Access as it evolves. We note that some Access sites already represent a more diverse range of specialties/disciplines and wish to see that aspect grow in the future, as such the backgrounds of COs will broaden as well. Ideally, an applicant would have experience with DEIS work and STEM, however, if the applicant has experience with only one, a mentee CO role could be appropriate. This aligns with our values of avoiding gatekeeping and a commitment to learning.

When considering someone's commitment to learning and growth, we recognize that all COs, and perhaps new ones, in particular, do not possess all the skills and experience relevant for this work to the fullest extent. Therefore, a commitment to learning and growth is important for being a CO. Such a commitment should include a commitment to learning and growth around issues of DEIS. This factor can go in two directions: we value potential new COs with a commitment to learning from others on the CO team, and also potential new COs who have skills to offer that the CO team does not already possess.

Lastly, someone's identities and the perspectives they bring are important considerations. These identities encompass both dimensions of societal oppression (race, gender, etc.), as well as community-level distinctions such as academic level (undergraduate, graduate, post-doc, faculty, etc.). To align with Access's values, the CO team should be as demographically representative as possible of the people in Access broadly. Therefore, the current makeup of the

CO team is also relevant. Specifically, we want to see more student representation among COs. However, along all dimensions of identity, we also wish to avoid tokenizing a potential new CO with respect to a marginalized identity they carry. We recommend that first, potential new COs be considered based on the other factors above to decide if they meet a baseline level of suitability for being a new CO. Once that baseline is met, we should prioritize those with marginalized identities. Furthermore, the applicant's financial ability to be a CO (for example in an unpaid volunteer role) should not be considered in the application process.

We strive for a transparent and equitable process for collecting the needed information about people interested in becoming COs, while also sharing the information they need to gauge their interest and take advantage of that process. To share information and be transparent, we recommend that criteria be communicated at different levels, such as required, recommended, and desirable, so that people know what is expected of COs and what information they should communicate.

We envision something like an application for becoming a new CO, but at the same time, we want to avoid filling out an application to become a burden or barrier. Therefore, we recommend a variety of modalities for responding to the application, including written submissions, or video/audio recordings. We also recommend clearly communicating the amount of information expected, as in, no more than a page, or 500 words, or equivalently 2 minutes of audio/video. We want to avoid the prompts being intimidating, they should ask for experiences, not formal titles. We envisioned several types of information to be collected. That includes a resume/CV of the applicant, as well as letters of recommendation from others about the applicant. However, we imagine these letters will be less formal than in other contexts, perhaps with the recommender filling out an online form instead of submitting a formal letter. We also propose that recommendations from student peers or mentees be included and valued.

We also recommend that each applicant share a diversity statement, describing their commitment to DEIS and their past experience doing work towards those ideals. They should also share a statement about the skills they could bring to the CO team, as well as the skills they want to develop through their work as a CO and what they hope to gain from being a CO more generally. Lastly, some sort of statement, poll, or questionnaire about different identities that they have should also be included.

We hope to create an equitable route to becoming a CO whether or not the applicant has a prior connection with Access. Especially for someone without deep familiarity with Access's principles, mission, and norms, a low-stakes informal interview could be useful. Perhaps current COs could take on the role of conducting these interviews. This process can evolve with the growth of the network.

Lastly, we discussed the need to avoid nepotism, just hiring friends, especially since Access relies on and fosters personal connections between members. When making decisions on the information described above, one approach would be to ask people to recuse themselves from

reviewing applications of their friends. Another would be to make parts of the application process anonymous, that is, removing identifiable information from written materials before they are reviewed. However given the interconnectedness of the network, anonymizing could be tricky. Maintaining anonymity can also be difficult while still considering someone's identity as a part of our commitment to DEISJ, especially as this could be discussed in the applicant's written submission. We considered two rounds of review, one with all information included in which those with personal connections have recused themselves, and one with only anonymized information for a more complete group of reviewers to consider. However, we have yet to discuss the specifics of a process for deciding what to do after application materials are collected.

The Selection Process

Summary

Once the applications have been received, there will be a selection process in place for reaching a consensus-based decision on those who will be offered CO position(s). There are a number of driving forces behind the decision-making process. The selection process will consist of a number of steps which are as follows:

1. Preselection Process, wherein the subcommittee narrows down the applicant pool
2. The First Round of Selection, wherein the hiring committee evaluates the baseline criteria of each applicant
3. The Second Round, wherein the hiring committee deliberates about applicants
4. Individual Selection/Offer, wherein the hiring committee makes its final selections
5. Final Communication, wherein the hiring committee assures the completion of the process

Process

In order for the selection process to occur, the Access Network shall allot for the formation of a hiring committee and subcommittee. These two committees shall have separate responsibilities throughout the selection process. The hiring committee shall be made up of all current CO's, who will be responsible for deliberating on the final selections for hire. The subcommittee shall be responsible for reducing the number of applicants in the pool (should the need arise) before handing off to the hiring committee. This shall be known as the "Preselection process." CO's on the hiring committee may delegate the subcommittee to other necessary tasks as they see fit. Once the subcommittee has finalized selections to a narrowed-down maximum of 20 applicants, they shall first make the applications confidential (personal identifying information redacted). Then, the subcommittee will pass on the candidates to the hiring committee for the First Round of Selection.

Upon receipt of the applicant pool, the hiring committee will take time to review each confidential application in full. During this First Round of Selection, applicants are only evaluated based on a set of baseline criteria. Suggestions for baseline criteria are:

- I. Evidence of a commitment to DEISJ,
- II. Evidence of prior participation in DEISJ activities,
- III. Experience leading/organizing some aspects of DEISJ work
- IV. Experience mentoring others more junior than you in something
- V. College STEM education experience (e.g. have taken a least a couple of college STEM courses, defined broadly)
- VI. Humility, commitment and willingness to learn more about DEISJ
- VII. Experience making consensus-based decisions

This step in the process may be repeated once or twice until consensus on who to consider for the Second Round is reached. Careful consideration should be taken in order to reach a determination within a timely manner. This however should not be reason to rush the process. Each applicant should be respected and given their due during the hiring process. While time for deliberation should be taken, we will prioritize reaching a synchronous consensus (though flexibility for asynchronous participation will be given if the need arises). We recommend giving everyone sufficient time to digest information (e.g. 1 week) and weighing in asynchronously. Synchronous meetings are intended for discussing the applicant pool and deliberating collectively. Should a committee member be unable to attend, meetings will be recorded and made available temporarily in order for participation and consensus to be met. Recordings of said meetings will be deleted and made unavailable when no longer needed in order to protect applicants' confidentiality.

Once a set of applicants has been agreed upon in the First Round of Selection, these applicants move onto the Second Round of Selection. During this round, the applicants' identities are no longer redacted and the hiring committee deliberates with the purpose of making hiring decisions.

The Second Round will occur with as many iterations as necessary until the hiring committee reaches 100% consensus on an individual by individual basis (meaning every member of the committee has agreed and has no more remaining questions or objections). Only at that time will any outreach to selected parties be made. Furthermore, providing the hiring committee with an option to participate asynchronously should similarly be implemented in the Second Round.

As each new induction of COs occurs, the selection process/criteria should be updated to check themselves (e.g. don't be part of perpetuating false standards of "excellence," because that's shady). The network should tailor criteria to the evolving needs of the network at the time of each hiring cycle.

Special consideration should be given to life experiences of the applicant, rather than formal titles held by said individual. The use of numerical “ranking” of applicants should also be avoided when not strictly necessary. A rubric should be devised in order to allow for a diversity of strengths in the final selection of COs. It should also be kept in mind that there is no “right box” that the ideal candidates should check off. The option for a candidate to be deemed “eligible” may simply be that they meet 6 out of the 12 criteria according to the rubric. Suggestions for what the rubric may include are the aforementioned baseline criteria in addition to considering identity characteristics of CO applicants:

- I. Evidence of a commitment to DEISJ,
- II. Evidence of prior participation in DEISJ activities,
- III. Experience leading/organizing some aspects of DEISJ work
- IV. Experience mentoring others more junior than you in something
- V. College STEM education experience (e.g. have taken a least a couple of college STEM courses, defined broadly)
- VI. Humility, commitment and willingness to learn more about DEISJ
- VII. Experience making consensus-based decisions
- VIII. Prioritize undergraduate and graduate student representatives
- IX. Prioritize people of color
- X. Prioritize underrepresented groups
- XI. Pay attention to balance of “inside” vs “outside” Access
- XII. Past experiences

In effort to remain as equitable as possible, the following should NOT be taken into consideration when selecting COs: financial privilege, GPA, standardized test scores and other factors that are out of the applicant’s control. Further refinement of this rubric may be decided upon by the network’s current COs or members.

There is no set number of COs that will always be selected. This number should be flexible to meet the needs of the network at the time. If there are not enough qualified applicants to fill each available role, then those slots may remain vacant until such time that a qualified applicant is available. Committee members should make decisions based on the content of applications themselves, avoiding bias from other things they might know of an applicant if anonymity is not preserved.

Remaining Questions for Future Growth and Changes

The intent of this document is **not** to provide a rigid framework that determines how new COs are on-boarded for every foreseeable future hiring round. Instead, it aims to provide a flexible framework that can change, adapt, and grow along with the Access Network without compromising the Network’s values. Issues that are unresolved, and especially issues that are currently unknowable, are likely to impact future decisions. Just like the Access Network itself,

we expect these guidelines to evolve over time to better adapt the needs of the people in the Network.

To inform future CO Onboarding Committees, current unanswered and unresolved questions identified by the Task Force are listed along with their context to provide a basis for future discussion:

- “Newly formalized” candidate principle for Access Network as an organization: Prioritize learning and growing together. Or, should we be explicit in saying *all* Access members have a responsibility to learn and grow together?
- The CO intern role is a manifestation of a more general principle that has emerged in our discussions: that learning and growing together should be a central responsibility of all COs. That work could look like the mentor-mentee relationship envisioned for CO interns, and also could involve mutual learning or co-mentorship between COs if both are seeking to improve in similar ways. Such flexibility in mentorship formats is especially important given the fact that established COs might not be equipped to be a mentor around some areas of growth, necessitating that new and experienced COs co-learn and co-mentor each other in some situations.
- The selection process may not always result in hiring the number of COs needed by the network. If additional COs are still needed we should strongly encourage denied applicants to reapply for subsequent rounds of hiring. Opening the application more regularly if absolute consensus hiring does not fulfill the network’s need for New COs.
- During the application process and the application review process, we need to explicitly differentiate when to apply confidentiality on applications and when to reveal the identities of the applicants. To ensure fair representation of COs from different sites, several aspects of an applicant must be considered. On the other hand, to promote an unbiased application process (including biases from applicants that may be friends of the application review members), the review process as whole should be as anonymous as possible, while still having parts of the process that consider identifying aspects of the application. The exact parts of this process where this will and will not happen have yet to be decided.
- In our discussions, we also considered whether COs should have term limits, and more generally, what the boundaries of the timescale of a CO’s tenure should be. We recognized that in the past, COs re-evaluate their participation roughly once an academic year, and that typical NSF grants last for ~3 years. Some CO responsibilities are tied to proposed work over the lifetime of a grant. We did not settle on whether CO term limits would benefit the organization or not. If the network took up this idea, it would impact the turnover rate of COs.
- We hope to create an equitable route to becoming a CO whether or not the applicant has a prior connection with Access. Especially for someone without deep familiarity with

Access's principles, mission, and norms, a low-stakes informal interview could be useful. Perhaps current COs could take on the role of conducting these interviews. This process can evolve with the growth of the network.

- In our statement of values we discourage the use of a tiered system of CO's. In our proposed CO roles section we still categorize different CO roles. We need to resolve this discrepancy.
- We recognize that more thinking could be done about the on-boarding process after hiring and the off-boarding process. The proposed annual CO responsibilities check-ins could be elaborated on. All of these are mentioned in the values statement.
- There is interest in Access having more of a presence at SACNAS, and the SACNAS career fairs, etc.
- As the network considers broader recruitment and relationship building with external organizations, we suggest that the Network keep in mind the financial barrier that may exist to participating in these organizations (be it membership dues, or access to resources to travel to in-person meetings/conferences).
- We suggest that Access look into setting up Google analytics on it's website, specifically on the CO FAQs web page, or the CO application itself in order to gather more evidence about how many people view these pages, and from where. From this data we may be able to infer how effectively the positions were disseminated/advertised to various local sites and beyond.