ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy

RESPONSIBLE	The ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee
APPROVED BY	ASCEPT Board
APPROVED AND COMMENCED	v.2.1 – May 2025
REPORTING	Twice yearly
REVIEW BY	ASCEPT Board – May 2025
RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATIONAL UNIT	Australasian Society of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists and Toxicologists (ASCEPT)

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1 Statement

The Australasian Society of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists and Toxicologists (ASCEPT) is committed to promoting values of equity, diversity, and inclusion in all society agendas, and identifying and addressing biases and prejudices. This commitment aligns with the diverse composition of our membership, fostering an inclusive and culturally competent community, and ensuring equity in all society activities and interactions.

2 Objectives

This Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) policy details our strategies to value and respect the diversity of our members and the communities we serve. We are committed to creating programs, events, and activities that are fair, accessible, flexible and inclusive, and are free from bias and discrimination.

Our objectives are to:

- integrate EDI into all aspects of the Society, including the operations of the Board, Executive Officer, and members, as well as the management of programs and events.
- support and empower our members to be able to do their best and bring their whole selves to their engagement in our field.
- support and empower a diversity of researchers, educators, students, professionals, stakeholders and affiliates to participate fully in our events, publications, and programs.
- ensure that all members have equitable access to opportunities available through the initiatives of ASCEPT and are equally rewarded and recognised for their contributions.
- be a Society of choice for pharmacologists and toxicologists from diverse communities and improve our ability to attract, develop, and retain a diverse membership.
- lead by example, so that our members, collaborators, and other organisations within our sector can see the tangible benefits of diversity.

EQUITY

Equity means being fair and reasonable by providing individuals with the necessary resources and opportunities to participate equally with others.

DIVERSITY

Diversity, as referenced in this policy, refers to all the characteristics that make individuals different from each other. It includes characteristics such as Indigeneity, gender, age, linguistic diversity, cultural identity, ability, neurodiversity, LGBTQIA+ identity, carer responsibilities, geographical location, socio-economic status, and faith/religion.

INCLUSION

Inclusion refers to the act of creating professional environments, events, and programs in which any individual or group feels welcomed, respected, valued, and empowered to fully participate and contribute.

Inclusion occurs when the diverse mix of people in our Society, programs, and at our events, experience:

- Feeling valued and respected
- Having a sense of belonging and connection
- Being able to access opportunities and resources
- Being able to contribute their perspectives, experiences, and knowledge.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all members of ASCEPT.

4 Policy principles and provisions

PRINCIPLES

The ASCEPT Board is committed to developing an equity, diversity, and inclusion policy that ensures positive equity, diversity, and inclusion values are promoted, and discrimination and unconscious bias are addressed to foster an inclusive culture where all members can contribute equitably.

The ASCEPT membership is responsible for promoting and enacting the equity, diversity, and inclusion principles outlined in this policy in all society activities.

PROVISIONS

Governance and leadership

- The ASCEPT Board will lead and model equity, diversity, and inclusion policies and practices to ensure the organisation is a representative, innovative, and socially and economically responsible organisation.
- The ASCEPT Board will ensure that all activities, operations, policy development, and strategic management align with values of equity, diversity, and inclusion described in this document.
- ASCEPT will have an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee that reports to the ASCEPT Board.
- The ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee will work with ASCEPT committees, fora, and program leaders to promote and implement provisions that reflect the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion as described in this document.
- The ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee will work with ASCEPT Mentoring Program leaders to facilitate meaningful mentor/mentee pairings and events that increase support for individuals at different career levels and that values of equity, diversity, and inclusion are applied to this process.
- The ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee will propose a course of action in response to feedback and complaints.

Membership

- ASCEPT will proactively seek and recruit members from diverse backgrounds.
- Voluntary participant data collection will be included in the Membership and Annual Scientific Meeting registration process.
- Targets for balanced representation in all society activities will align with the diverse composition of the society membership, including:
    - Board representation, including executive and office bearers
    - Scientific Advisory Committee
    - Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee
    - Annual Scientific Meeting Organising Committees
    - Special Interest Group/Forum Committees
    - Delegation and representation at national and international events.

Prizes, awards, meetings, and events

- Each Annual Scientific Meeting and ASCEPT-sponsored event will begin with a culturally appropriate welcome or acknowledgment, in recognition of the traditional custodians of the land and local protocols.

- An equity, diversity, and inclusion event will be held at each Annual Scientific Meeting.
- ASCEPT will apply the values of equity, diversity, and inclusion described in this document to prizes, awards, meetings, and events.
- The ASCEPT Annual Scientific Meeting organising committees, Special Interest Group committees, Forum committees, and Symposia proposers will actively seek diverse candidates to participate in ASCEPT activities and events, including session chairs and speakers.
- ASCEPT members will actively seek diverse candidates for Society awards, and encourage them to apply, nominate them, or mentor them, and include a statement of opportunity and performance evidence, where appropriate.
- Childcare facilities and support for parents and carers at Annual Scientific Meetings and ASCEPT-sponsored events will be sought and provided wherever possible.
- Dedicated spaces for religious/faith purposes at Annual Scientific Meetings and ASCEPT-sponsored events will be sought and provided wherever possible.
- Alterative communication methods for programmed activities and events at Annual Scientific Meetings and ASCEPT-sponsored events will be sought and provided wherever possible.
- Appropriate access to programmed activities and events at Annual Scientific Meetings and ASCEPT-sponsored events will be provided for those identifying with accessibility needs.

Communications, marketing, outreach, and engagement

- ASCEPT will promote equity, diversity, and inclusion values when publishing ASCEPT news, achievements of society members, and promoting society-related activities.
- The ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy will be available on the ASCEPT website and the Annual Scientific Meeting website.

Accountability, monitoring, and measuring

- It is the responsibility of the ASCEPT Board and all members to ensure the implementation of this policy.
- The ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee will annually review performance on targets and the objectives of this policy.
- This policy will be reviewed every two years by the ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee; this policy may also be reviewed as needed.

5 Violation of this policy

Complaints, reports of violation, or feedback on this policy should be raised directly to the ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee at EDI@ascept.org. If the complainant feels unable to raise an issue with the ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee, they should approach the ASCEPT Executive Officer and members of the ASCEPT Board Executive who are not members of the ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee.

Where this policy is violated, the ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee will inform and collaborate with the ASCEPT President immediately to identify swift and appropriate action.

6 Legislative compliance

This policy supports ASCEPT's compliance with multiple laws, regulations, and standards regarding human rights and unlawful discrimination and harassment under the following legislation (and other relevant anti-discrimination laws):

- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Australian Age Discrimination Act 2004

- Australian Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Sex Discrimination Amendment (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Intersex Status) Act 2013
- Australian Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Australian Racial Hatred Act 1995
- Australian Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- New Zealand Human Rights Act 1993
- New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990
- Treaty of Waitangi 1840

7 Definitions and acronyms

TERM/ACRONYM	DEFINITION
ASCEPT	Australasian Society of Clinical and Experimental Pharmacologists and Toxicologists
ASM	Annual Scientific Meeting
BOARD	means the Board of Directors of the Company
EXECUTIVE OFFICER	means the person appointed via a management agreement. The Executive Officer is responsible for the management of the Executive Office and membership activities of ASCEPT

8 Versioning

FORMER VERSION(S)

Version 1.1 – ASCEPT Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. June 2019
Version 1.2 – ASCEPT Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. June 2019
Version 1.3 – ASCEPT Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. August 2019
Version 1.4 – ASCEPT Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. September 2019
Version 1.5 – ASCEPT Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy. September 2019
Version 2.1 – ASCEPT Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy. May 2025