



ACS Inclusivity Style Guide practice exercise 1: Description of an award

Instructions

Start by reading the original text. Use the [ACS Inclusivity Style Guide](#) to try to identify where more inclusive language could be used. Then scroll to the next page to see where the text does not use inclusive language. Last, scroll to the final version to see text that follows guidelines from the ACS Inclusivity Style Guide. Find the full guide at www.acs.org/inclusivityguide. Email ISG@acs.org with questions.

Original text

The ACS Science Award is intended to recognize a young, diverse chemistry student's research.

Before nominating a student, ensure that he/she meets the following criteria:

- A chemistry student from one of the following groups:
 - Undergraduate student, 20–22 years of age
 - Master's or doctoral student
- Part of one of the following minorities:
 - African-American
 - Hispanic
 - Alaska Native or American Indian
- Fluent in English
- Available to stand on stage at the ACS spring meeting in Washington, DC, for the award ceremony on March 15
- Willing to commit to a pre- and postconference virtual event related to the ACS spring meeting

Problematic text

- **Young:** Age is separate from time of completion of a degree. Because age is not relevant, it should be deleted. Separately, in the context of awards for nonstudents, "early-career chemist" could be an alternative to "young." See ["When and how to mention age"](#) for more information.
- **Diverse:** "Diverse" isn't appropriate to describe a singular noun that doesn't include different elements. It is clearer to specify the aspect of diversity you're referring to. An alternative here is "the research of a chemistry student with a race or ethnicity underrepresented in the sciences." Remember that when you use "underrepresented," you should define the category of representation. See ["When to use 'diverse'"](#) and ["Minorities, non-White"](#) for more information.
- **He/she:** "He/she" implies there are only two genders. Use gender-neutral phrasing, such as "your nominee," to make people of all genders feel included. See ["Not implying that gender is a binary construct"](#) for more information.
- **20–22 years of age:** People can graduate at any age. Referring to age when it's not relevant can make people who aren't in that group feel excluded. Instead, specify the level of undergraduates, such as "third- and fourth-year undergraduate students." See ["When and how to mention age"](#) for more information.
- **One of:** This wording excludes multiracial nominees. Reword to reflect that people can have multiple races and ethnicities. See "Race and ethnicity" in the ["Common questions"](#) entries in the section on forms for more information.
- **Minorities:** The term "minorities" can be factually inaccurate and is degrading. Respectful alternatives include "underrepresented racial or ethnic groups in chemistry" and "has a race or ethnicity underrepresented in the sciences." When possible, it is helpful to name those underrepresented groups. See ["Minorities, non-White"](#) for more information.
- **African-American:** Hyphenating dual heritages, such as "African American," can show bias by implying that people do not fully belong to one group. In addition, "or Black" should be added because not everyone who is Black identifies as African American. See ["Capitalization and spelling of races, ethnicities, and nationalities"](#) and ["When and how to mention race and ethnicity"](#) for more information.
- **Order in race and ethnicity list:** The order of social group presentation may imply that the first-mentioned group is the norm or standard. Instead, order these groups alphabetically. See ["Order the responses in alphabetical or numerical order"](#) for more information.



- **Hispanic:** "Hispanic" refers to a person from a Spanish-speaking region, while "Latino" refers to a person of Latin American origin. To make sure you capture these overlapping but not identical groups, use both identifiers by using "Hispanic or Latin American" or "Hispanic or Latino." See ["Hispanic, Latino, Latinx"](#) for more information.
- **Fluent in English:** Requiring fluency in English to receive an award may discriminate against English-language learners. Instead, specify what skill is necessary. If the goal is to limit the award to people in a US school, say that. If the review committee needs to be able to read the research in English, then one option would be "Have [number] papers published in English." See ["Be appropriately specific"](#) for more information.
- **Stand:** Requiring people to stand for the award precludes people who use a wheelchair. And requiring presence at a meeting may limit nominations to only people who have the resources to travel. See ["When to include personal information"](#) for more information.



Final version

The ACS Science Award is intended to recognize the research of a chemistry student with a race or ethnicity underrepresented in the sciences.

Before nominating a student, ensure that your nominee meets the following criteria:

- Is a chemistry student from one of the following groups:
 - Third- or fourth-year undergraduate student
 - Master's or doctoral student
- Has a race or ethnicity underrepresented in the sciences.* Examples include:
 - African American or Black
 - Alaska Native or American Indian
 - Hispanic or Latin American
- Has at least one research publication in English
- Is willing to commit to a pre- and postconference virtual event related to the ACS spring meeting

*We define "underrepresented races and ethnicities" as those that have a lower percentage among US science students than in the US population as a whole.



ACS Inclusivity Style Guide practice exercise 2: Email to a project team

Instructions

Start by reading the original text. Use the [ACS Inclusivity Style Guide](#) to try to identify where more inclusive language could be used. Then scroll to the next page to see where the text does not use inclusive language. Last, scroll to the final version to see text that follows guidelines from the ACS Inclusivity Style Guide. Find the full guide at www.acs.org/inclusivityguide. Email ISG@acs.org with questions.

Original text

Hi guys,

Thanks for meeting yesterday to review the status of the project. To recap:

- We decided that we need to add a diverse team member to help us make sure our content reaches a BIPOC audience. He or she should come on board by next month.
- Sherry is in charge of finding a millennial to join our team—we need someone who can help us optimize our reach on social media.
- Ava volunteered to man the phone line while Bob is out.
- Unresolved question: Is the website set up to be accessible to the disabled? We need to resolve this before we next meet.

As a reminder, our next meeting will be in person. To celebrate, we will order lunch. Any requests? I'd personally like something ethnic, but I'm open to other suggestions.

Last but not least: Thank you to Kenji for the reminder that Ava prefers the pronoun "they" because she's gender nonbinary. Let's all please respect that preference.

Thanks,

Team Leader

Problematic text

- **Guys:** The gendered term "guys" could make people who aren't men feel excluded. Gender-neutral alternatives are "all," "everyone," "folks," and "team." See ["Gender-neutral language"](#) for more information.
- **Diverse:** "Diverse" isn't appropriate to describe a singular noun that doesn't include different elements. It is clearer to specify the aspect of diversity you're referring to. See ["When to use 'diverse' "](#) for more information.

In addition, it is important to create a diverse team from the outset and with the intention of treating everyone as full team members. Relying on a person who has a marginalized identity as a representative of all people with that identity is unfair. And asking someone to join a team just for the appearance of diversity and without giving that person any real power is not true inclusion. See ["Involve diverse people in the creative process"](#) for more information.

- **BIPOC:** The term "BIPOC" reduces a large group of people to a word that, because it is an abbreviation, does not meet its intention of centering Black and Indigenous people. Instead, spell out who you are referring to. "People of color" is generally preferred because it avoids setting up a hierarchy and is not US centric. See ["BIPOC, BAME, POC"](#) and ["People of color"](#) for more information.
- **He or she:** Using "he or she" treats gender as binary, when in reality, more than two genders exist. To make people of all genders feel included, reword the sentence or use the singular "they." See ["Not implying that gender is a binary construct"](#) and ["Singular 'they' when gender is not known or not important"](#) for more information.
- **Millennial:** Using a broad term to refer to a generation ignores important differences within that group. This wording also assumes that younger people will know more about social media than older people, which isn't necessarily true. See ["Generational terms"](#) for more information.
- **Man:** Gendered terms can make people who don't share the gender of that word feel excluded. A gender-neutral option here includes "staff," "monitor," "operate," or "work." See ["Gender-neutral language"](#) for more information.
- **The disabled:** Using "the" plus an adjective to refer to a group of people reduces people of many identities to one label. Instead, use a description that emphasizes the person. Options here include "people with disabilities" or "disabled people." See ["Avoid labeling people by a characteristic"](#) for more information.
- **Ethnic:** The meaning of the word "ethnic" depends on your cultural framework. Using it as a euphemism for a specific culture is demeaning, and using it for any



culture that isn't Western implies that Western cultures are the norm. An alternative here is to name the specific type of food—for example, Indian, Thai, or Vietnamese—or to more specifically describe the range of foods desired—for example, "other than pizza or burgers." See ["Recognize words that assume a cultural norm"](#) for more information.

- **Prefers:** Using the word "prefer" to refer to pronouns implies that someone's correct pronoun is optional rather than required. An alternative here is "Ava uses the pronoun 'they'" or "Ava's pronoun is 'they.'" See ["Discussing pronouns"](#) for more information.
- **She's:** This is the person's wrong pronoun. It should be "they are." See ["Singular 'they' for people who use that pronoun"](#) for more information.
- **Gender nonbinary:** The wording "gender nonbinary" does not treat the gender "nonbinary" like other genders (e.g., "gender female" would not make sense). It also gives unnecessary personal information--people do not need to know that Ava is nonbinary to know to use the pronoun "they." Instead, the phrase "because she's gender nonbinary" should be cut. See ["When and how to mention gender and sexual orientation"](#) for more information.
- **Preference:** Again, "preference" in reference to pronouns isn't appropriate because it implies that correct pronoun use is optional. An alternative here is "Let's all please respect Ava and use their correct pronoun." See ["Discussing pronouns"](#) for more information.



Final version

Hi all,

Thanks for meeting yesterday to review the status of the project. To recap:

- We decided that we need to diversify our team so that we get a broader range of perspectives and make sure our content reaches a wide audience. Let's aim for three more people to come on board by next month. When we work on this project next year, we'll ensure we recruit a diverse team from the start.
- Sherry is in charge of finding someone who can help us optimize our reach on social media.
- Ava volunteered to staff the phone line while Bob is out.
- Unresolved question: Is the website set up to be accessible to people with disabilities? We need to resolve this before we next meet.

As a reminder, our next meeting will be in person. To celebrate, we will order lunch. Any requests? I'd personally like something Indian or Thai, but I'm open to other suggestions.

Last but not least: Thank you to Kenji for the reminder that Ava's pronoun is "they." Let's all please respect Ava and use the correct pronoun.

Thanks,

Team Leader



ACS Inclusivity Style Guide practice exercise 3: Image on toxic workplaces

Instructions

The next page shows two images that a project team is considering for a story on toxic workplace cultures. First, use the [ACS Inclusivity Style Guide](#) to identify which image is more appropriate. Then scroll down to read why the good image works and why the bad image does not work. Find the full guide at www.acs.org/inclusivityguide. Email ISG@acs.org with questions.

Image 1



Credit: Mr.Good/Shutterstock/C&EN

Image 2



Credit: HappyPictures/Shutterstock

Why the first image doesn't work:

The first image showcases a Black woman yelling at an employee, which perpetuates the racial stereotype of “the angry Black woman,” a racist trope in American society that portrays Black women as sassy, ill mannered, and ill tempered by nature. See [“Stereotypes in images”](#) for more information.

Additionally, a reverse search of the graphic shows that in the original, the woman was not Black. Changing the skin tone without considering the implications is an example of trying to do a quick fix instead of approaching diversity and inclusion holistically and thoughtfully. See [“Performative diversity in images”](#) for more information.



Credit: Mr.Good/Shutterstock

Why the second image works:

The second image disrupts the norm of White men being bosses but does not perpetuate harmful stereotypes.





ACS Inclusivity Style Guide practice exercise 4: Image on returning to work

Instructions

The next page shows two images that a project team is considering using to accompany information on returning to work. First, use the [ACS Inclusivity Style Guide](#) to identify which image is more appropriate. Then scroll down to read why the good image works and why the bad image does not work. Find the full guide at www.acs.org/inclusivityguide. Email ISG@acs.org with questions.

Image 1



Credit: GoodStudio/Shutterstock

Image 2



Credit: GoodStudio/Shutterstock/C&EN

Why the first image doesn't work:

The entire staff is White, including the character who seems to represent the boss.



Why the second image works:

Incorporating other races and skin tones into the illustration shows a more diverse workplace. See [“How to choose images”](#) for more information.





ACS Inclusivity Style Guide practice exercise 5: Image on inclusive hiring practices

Instructions

The next page shows two images that a project team is considering for a campaign on inclusive hiring practices. First, use the [ACS Inclusivity Style Guide](#) to identify which image is the better choice. Then scroll down to read which image was chosen and why. Find the full guide at www.acs.org/inclusivityguide. Email ISG@acs.org with questions.

Image 1



Image 2



Credit: Andrey_Popov/Shutterstock (both)

Why the first image is better:

Technically, there is nothing wrong with the second image. But inclusivity doesn't mean just race; it can also mean gender, religion, sexuality, disability, and more. The first image does a better job of showing an inclusive work environment that would appeal to diverse audiences, including job seekers with disabilities and underrepresented racial groups in the sciences. See [“How to choose images”](#) for more information.





ACS Inclusivity Style Guide practice exercise 6: Image on job opportunities

Instructions

The next page shows two images that a project team is considering for a campaign on job opportunities. First, use the [ACS Inclusivity Style Guide](#) to identify which image is the better choice. Then scroll down to read which image was chosen and why. Find the full guide at www.acs.org/inclusivityguide. Email ISG@acs.org with questions.

Image 1



Image 2



Credit: fizkes/Shutterstock (both)

Why the second image is better:

The second image is more gender inclusive. The first image appears to be led by a man, and the only other visible people appear to be men. See [“How to choose images”](#) and [“Editing photos”](#) for more information.

