

Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Award 2018

Guidelines for Faculty Submissions

As stated in the Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Award (DDFA) Call for submissions, simply increasing the numbers of designated group faculty is not sufficient to create and support diversity at Dalhousie. While the DDFA program is intended to have a direct impact on the number of designated group faculty, we must also consider the other factors which support diversity in the long term and which will aid us in achieving the goals for Strategic Priority 5.2, to “foster a collegial culture grounded in diversity and inclusiveness.”

Provost and Vice-President Academic Carolyn Watters has asked faculties to describe their commitment to supporting diversity that encompasses: education, outreach, recruitment, retention, and organizational climate. Below, please find a brief discussion of some of the key issues related to these areas to guide the development of your submission for the 2018 Dalhousie Diversity Faculty Awards.

Education – There are a number of ways that education can be defined in this context. A few examples of “education” initiatives that could support diversity are: offering diversity education for faculty, staff and students; and incorporating diversity into curriculum development.

Outreach – A long-term plan for sustaining diversity in a faculty should include outreach to both prospective and current students. This may include outreach to diverse groups of prospective students as part of a student recruitment plan, or a mentoring program for existing students to support their development towards a career in academia. Community outreach could also be a factor that would contribute to diversity and inclusion.

Recruitment – One of the challenges in recruiting for the DDFA is the small pool of potential applicants. Submissions that offer creative solutions to this challenge should be viewed positively. For example, the 2012 Associate Deans’ Academic Council (ADAC) noted that “there was particular strength in proposals that provided flexibility, such as hiring in one of several departments.” Other possible solutions could include targeted distribution of the advertisement, or prior knowledge of a desirable (and eligible) candidate (or pool of candidates) in the field.

Retention – It is anticipated that the DDFA program will help bring some diverse academics to Dalhousie, but what will keep them here? Plans for orientation and onboarding, mentorship and professional development, should all be developed with diversity in mind. Any initiative that aims to identify and address systemic discrimination would also strengthen our retention of diverse academics.

Organizational Climate – It is imperative that we take climate into consideration as we actively pursue diverse candidates. Once recruited, we want to ensure that new faculty members are welcomed into an inclusive environment. Initiatives that aim to create inclusion in the workplace, and a demonstrated understanding of these issues would strengthen DDFA submissions.

Each of these criteria can be interpreted in a number of ways, and in the spirit of diversity, it is important that we do not try to define them narrowly, but remain open to diverse perspectives and interpretations. As the 2012 members of ADAC noted, support for diverse faculty “extends beyond the formality of work routine and responsibilities; it extends into social support networks and providing a respectful work environment.”