

Some Thoughts on EDIA in Research Computing Cyber-Infrastructure

Matthew T. West
HTCondor Workshop Autumn 2023
IJCLab in Orsay, France

Generic White Guy SysAdmin™

- **Who am I?**
 - Upper-middle class cis-het white man from the northeastern USA
 - Research Computing Journeyman
 - Former Physics PhD candidate (Syracuse)
 - HPC SysAdmin / DevOps Engineer at the University of Exeter



Is there an EDIA problem in research computing?

Equity, **D**iversity, **I**nclusion & **A**ccessibility

YES!

::gestures about::

Ref: Missing Millions (USA)

How did the sector get here?

- *Comfort with the existing system* {The Biggest Current Reason}
- **Implicit (& Explicit) discrimination**
- **Explicit policies by governments & universities**
- **Product marketing**
- **Exclusionary work culture**
- **(Rentier) Capitalism**

Ref: “Why can’t tech fix its gender problem?” by Prof. Margaret O’Mara

What about us in dHTC?

- Those who maintain & support infrastructure are a critical component in any effort to *"Democratize"* computing.
- Consistently having C.I.-focused workshops be predominantly (white) men indicates we need to do much more.

So... what do we do to rectify the problem(s)?

Improving a Workshop

- **Things known to work**
 - Meaningful online options
 - Financial support for junior staff to attend
 - Prioritize talks from those who are underrepresented / less visible in the community
 - A more diverse organizing committee
- **Each item requires disturbing comfortable boundaries**

What about growing our C.I. community?

- **More things known to work**
 - Folks who believe there is no problem are welcome to leave
 - Practising what we preach and share power
 - Expand recruitment beyond the usual places
 - Student jobs with the infrastructure team
 - Reach out to adjacent research computing communities
 - Update communications tools
 - Training materials for new staff

Let's Resist the Skinnerian Impulse



Am I So Out of Touch?



**No, its the children who
are wrong.**

Oh, just one more thing...

- **Transparency & Accountability are Essential**

- What was done?
- Is there improvement? Yes/No
- Of what sort?
- Share with the community what you have tried
- This is a long-term community effort



NBC Universal via [IMDB](#)

**Thank you for your patience.
Thoughts?**