

## Language Equity Review Guide and Resources

**Goal:** Incorporate gender balanced language in job posting descriptions to attract diverse applicants.

**Why:** Language is a cue about who belongs in the culture and the words we use set the tone for the search and selection process. Research indicates significant increases in the diversity, quality and quantity of applicants when writing job descriptions with an equal balance of agentic and relational language.

**How:** The general guidelines and resources below can be used to guide your thinking as you write or update job posting descriptions. Resources include samples of opening paragraphs, lists of words and expressions, a free word count tool, related articles and posting samples.

- Positive gender neutral words and expressions appeal to a more diverse population. Use a balanced approach with your word choices and overall tone.
  - Agentic words describe one's internal agency or drive to achieve desired result in a manner that is confident, assertive, competitive, independent, courageous strategic or creative.
  - Relational words describe one's approach to interacting with others such as being a collaborator, supportive or committed.
- Use s/he, you or their when referring to a potential candidate to evoke a more personal tone and broaden the demographic appeal of the role.
- Avoid the use of formal phrases, SLAC specific terms, and cliché's.
- Refer to the resources page for samples of gender neutral words and expressions associated with competencies and examples of agentic and relational words.

### Examples Position Overview:

- Review the gender balanced job description overview samples. These can be used as templates or guides to help you construct your position overview. You can also incorporate the style, tone or aspects from one or more samples to enhance an existing description.

### Word Count Tool:

- The Gender bias calculator is a free online tool that can serve as an additional resource to help you gauge the tone of your job posting or position overview.
- The word count tool captures the number of instances where agentic or relational associated words are identified. Use discretion to interpret the results.

## Inclusive Job Description Checklist

If the job description is missing any of the following information, contact the hiring manager to discuss and update accordingly.

### 1. The “Position Overview” section of the job description answers each of the following questions:

- What is the mission of the team / project that the successful candidate would be joining?
- What key challenge will the successful candidate be solving in this role?
- What resource responsibilities will this future employee have to help solve this challenge? (managing a team of people, budget, etc...)
- What are some key results that this future employee will be expected to produce?
- What are the primary collaboration needs of this role...i.e. how would the ideal candidate work with others to achieve results?

### 2. The job description body includes the following information:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> JOB PURPOSE           | MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CORE DUTIES           | <input type="checkbox"/> Education & Experience          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS | <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge, Skills and Abilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WORKING CONDITIONS    | <input type="checkbox"/> Certifications and Licenses     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WORK STANDARDS        | COMPETENCIES   |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> SLAC Competencies               |
|  | <input type="checkbox"/> Job Specific Competencies       |

### 3. Overall, how balanced is the current language used in the job description?

More Agentic             More Relational  
50%

## Examples of Gender Neutral/Inclusive Job Descriptions

### Balanced and Inclusive

#### **Sample # 1:**

Do **you** enjoy **collaborating** with a diverse group of people to solve complex challenges? Does **contributing** to breakthrough discoveries in science and working with unique experimental instrumentation in a world-leading scientific research environment excite **you**? The XYZ Department within the XYZ Directorate at SLAC is seeking two Systems Engineers to **help** with planning, implementing, and operating customized experimental installations, and developing enhancements to **our** scientific instrumentation and supporting ...

#### **Sample # 2:**

We are looking for an excellent Network Specialist with extensive experience in managing, developing and configuring complex network installations, network protocols and architecture frameworks to support Lab-wide central network services and to **help** pursue the exciting technical opportunities ahead. **You** will be joining a great team that supports networks comprised of up to 100Gbps segments with links to on-site and world-wide critical scientific research and operational support....

### Needs Improvement

#### **Sample # 1**

SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory is seeking a Project Scientist to join the XYZ division. The division conducts research to determine the physical properties of matter in extreme conditions spanning areas of high-pressure material science, fusion plasmas to laboratory astrophysics. The **successful candidate** will conduct experimental research in high energy density science and will perform experiments using XYX and high-power lasers to determine the evolution of magnetic fields and their effects on the physics and support world-wide **mission critical** scientific research and operational support.

#### **Sample # 2**

The XYX group seeks an Engineering Physicist to develop synchrotron radiation instrumentation and optics for new and upgraded beam lines. The **successful candidate** will work with scientific staff and user groups to develop beam line performance requirements and **oversee** a team of engineers, designers, and technicians in translating these performance requirements into functioning hardware. As such, this position will **vigorously leverage** system conceptualization, engineering, design, fabrication, installation, and commissioning while assuming project management responsibilities.

## Position Overview Samples

### Sample # 1

“Do you enjoy collaborating with a diverse group of people to solve complex computing challenges? Does contributing to breakthrough discoveries in science excite you? The Computing Division at SLAC is seeking an XYZ specialist to help us provide dedicated world-class technology leadership and IT service support to the lab. Reporting to the XYZ, the XYZ will lead a team of 5 software engineers focused on developing XYZ. You will work with XYZ and with other XYZ teams across the lab to create XYZ.

### Sample # 2

SLAC’s XYZ team is responsible for developing and executing XYZ strategy and is hiring amazing employees to manage the challenges ahead of us. As part of the XYZ team you’ll have broad exposure to various teams within XYZ, including XYZ organizations and also a number of internal/external entities. We are seeking a XYZ who can bring a proven track record of experience to XYZ to build and scale up a XYZ team. This will be a fast paced and dynamic role that will work closely with our XYZ and XYZ teams to ensure we optimize our XYZ process reduce risk and optimize XYZ costs. The role will focus primarily on the XYZ and XYZ and Z solutions, as well as continuous process improvement.

### Sample # 3

It's an incredible time to join the SLAC XYZ team as we are revolutionizing the way XYZ and XYZ. SLAC’s XYZ department is looking for a talented XYZ to help us develop a team to deliver world-class XYZ. SLAC’s XYZ team provides service and tools training for both internal and external users and researchers worldwide, having a direct impact on XYZ and XYZ. This role reports into the XYZ and will have the opportunity to contribute to our XYZ and the evolution of our XYZ strategy. We are seeking someone passionate about XYZ in the most effective and engaging XYZ experience possible.

### Sample #4

We are looking for an outstanding XYZ to help tackle the exciting technical opportunities ahead. You'll be joining a great team that develops core Platform infrastructure used by over XYZ at XYZ and handles over XYZ \$\$ operations per day. Our areas of responsibility range from data modeling, business logic, distributed processing, and data compression to Pub/Sub messaging, system insights, data diagnostics, and beyond. This is an opportunity to develop high-profile elements of the SLAC XYZ architecture, build systems at scale, use and contribute to open source technologies, and seek challenging and business-impacting projects for the team to tackle.

## Examples of Words Resources

| Knowledge, Skills and Abilities | Suggested Gender Neutral Words or phrases                         |  |   |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Communication                   | • Tact  | • Diplomacy  | • Makes and communicates clear decisions  |
| Leadership/ Strategy/Decision   | • Authority<br>• Conduct<br>• Maintain                            | • Operate<br>• Run   | • Handle<br>• Chair   |
| Driving Result                  | • Improvement<br>• Bring up<br>• Actively<br>• Champion<br>• Feed | • Initiative<br>• Prioritize<br>• Foster<br>• Cultivate<br>• Further | • Advance<br>• Solution oriented<br>• Develop<br>• With dedication, with enthusiasm |
| Experience/Expertise            | • Authority<br>• Integrate  | • Guide  | • Skilled   |
| Collaboration/Contribution      | • Contribute<br>• Collaborative<br>• Chip-in<br>• Give            | • Anticipate<br>• Diverse set<br>• Commit<br>• Supply                | • Anticipates the needs of others<br>• Flexible<br>• Devote                         |
| Problem Solving                 | •   | •  | • Distills a problem to its essence<br>• Solution oriented                          |
| Attributes                      | • Imaginative<br>• Thoughtful<br>• Curious                        | • Trustworthy<br>• Resilient<br>• Intuitive                          | • Self-aware<br>• Socially responsible  |

| Avoid these              | Consider these           |                            |                   |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|
| Escalate                 | • Advance<br>• Raise     | • Bring up<br>• Intensify  | • Call out        |
| Oversee                  | • Chair<br>• Watch       | • Handle                   | • Lead            |
| Ambitious/Assertive      | • Bold                   | • High-reaching            | • Visionary       |
| World-class              | • Premier                | • Special                  | • Elite           |
| Comply with              | • Align with             | • Follow                   | • In sync with    |
| Proactively              | • Actively               | • With dedication          | • With enthusiasm |
| Leverage                 | • Use                    | • Bring to bear            | • Demonstrate     |
| Demonstrated Proficiency | • Shown skill            | • Shown strength           | • Shown talent    |
| Tackling                 | • Aiming<br>• Seeking    | • Pursuing                 | • Takin on        |
| Mission Critical         | • Most important         | • High-demand              | • Critical        |
| Action oriented          | • Takes practical action |                            |                   |
| Proven                   | • Attested<br>• Tried    | • Confirmed<br>• Validated | • Shown           |
| Tackle                   | • Aim<br>• Take on       | • Pursue                   | • Seek            |
| Successful candidate     | • You                    |                            |                   |

## Create a Balanced Approach

| Male/Agentic    | Female/Relational    |
|-----------------|----------------------|
| Confident       | supportive           |
| Strategic       | team player          |
| Ambitious       | helpful              |
| Outspoken       | friendly             |
| Independent     | thoughtful           |
| Risk-taker      | collaborative        |
| Entrepreneurial | committed            |
| Driver          | caring               |
| Influential     | tactical             |
| Go-Getter       | hardworking          |
| Innovator       | relationship builder |

| Inclusive Terms   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| Adaptable         | Leans in             |
| Choose            | Plans for the future |
| Collaborate       | resilient            |
| Creative          | Self-aware           |
| Curious           | Socially responsible |
| Excellent         | Thoughtful           |
| Flexible schedule | Trustworthy          |
| Multitasking      | Up-to-date           |
| Health            | Wellness program     |
| Imaginative       | Intuitive            |
| Foster            |                      |

## Free Word Count Tool

The Gender bias calculator is a free online tool that can serve as an additional resource to help you gauge the tone of your position overview or job posting.

**How it works:** Copy and paste the position overview into the text box and press enter to reveal the word count for masculine (agentic) and feminine (relational) words.

### How to interpret results:

- Use discretion in the interpretation.
- The word count tool captures the number of instances where agentic or relational associated words are identified and some of the words may be essential to the core function of the job (e.g. research, analyze, etc.).
- If one list dominates the position overview or job posting, review the list and consider alternative language and/or including additional information about the role to include more balanced language.

### Free Gender bias calculator with word counts

<http://www.tomforth.co.uk/genderbias/>

**Gender bias calculator**

This calculator was inspired by this [AV/IS blog](#) post on gender biases in recommendation letters. The blog post and [the scientific paper](#); it is based on also explain why this gender bias is important. I am grateful to [Dr. Karen James](#) for bringing it to my attention and leading me to examine my own written recommendations.

[Try an example!](#)

management; research issues, develops lab's position and attempt to resolve grievances brought under the collective bargaining agreement; research trends and practices in Labor/Employee Relations and recommend programs that will enhance employee and labor relations at SLAC; research and craft new policies as authorized by the Human Resources Director; and develop and conduct internal laboratory training to management and staff on employment and labor law, and Stanford and SLAC policies.

Female-associated words | Male-associated words

Services  
dedicated  
responsible  
workplace  
efforts  
responsibilities  
supervisors  
organizational  
training

investigations,  
investigations;  
research  
research  
research

**Articles:**

10 companies that get gender bias in job description right:

<https://textio.com/wordnerd/top-ten-gender-bias/>

Here are the words that may keep women from applying:

[http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/02/textio-unnitive-bias-software\\_n\\_7493624.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2015/06/02/textio-unnitive-bias-software_n_7493624.html)

Monster, Key words:

<http://hiring.monster.com/hr/hr-best-practices/recruiting-hiring-advice/attracting-job-candidates/search-engine-optimization.aspx>

How to write effective job description:

<https://itxdesign.com/how-to-write-effective-job-descriptions/>

Hire More Women in Tech

<http://www.hiremorewomenintech.com/>

<http://www.eremedia.com/ere/you-dont-know-it-but-women-see-gender-bias-in-your-job-postings/>