

University of Colorado Search Advocates ^[1]

About Search Advocates

Search Advocates promote validity, equity, diversity and inclusion within searches. Advocates work to ensure search and selection processes will be fair to all candidates. Search Advocates work alongside search committees as a consultant and process advisor to provide committees support and guidance at every stage of the process. Advocates help advance inclusive excellence by asking questions to help committee members:

- Examine, explore, and reflect on their thinking, decisions and processes
- Understand places where bias commonly shows up during the search
- Identify and promote practices that advance access, equity, and inclusion
- Minimize the impacts of cognitive and structural biases.

A Search Advocate typically serves as an external (often non-voting) member of the committee to help maintain impartiality. As an external committee member, an advocate can help the committee explore assumptions, norms, and practices that an internal member might not notice or question. The search advocate plays a vital role throughout the search processes including in position development and job posting, recruitment, screening, interviews, references, evaluation, and integration of the new faculty or staff member into the institution.

Search Advocate Training

The System Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) partners with Oregon State University's [Search Advocate Program](#) ^[2] to conduct our trainings. Their program is highly regarded nationally as a leading innovative program in advancing equity within search hiring processes. The 16-hour training grounds participants in a theoretical foundation of current research about equity and bias, information about the changing legal landscape in hiring, and an overview of inclusive employment principles.

CU's Search Advocate Program

The system DEI Office launched our CU system-wide Search Advocate Program in the Fall of 2020. The goal of the program is to embed search advocacy principles and practices into CU's hiring processes. The DEI office has a 3-year program implementation plan designed to ensure there is good support and buy-in across the system and the program has the proper structure and resourcing to support its long-term success and sustainability. Overtime, we will shift from using OSU's training to developing an internal CU training model that can be adapted for each of the four campuses, which will help scale up the number of trained advocates.

Search Advocates are CU staff and faculty with representation from all four campuses and the system office. To date, over 140 individuals have completed training with our next training

scheduled for April 2023. While coordinated at the system level, each campus is empowered to develop and build out their campus program to best meet their campus needs. A couple of the campuses are beginning to launch pilot programs to have individuals sit on committees in the search advocate role while others are still in the design phase.

The CU system Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion hosts quarterly community of practice check-ins open to all CU trained search advocates across the system. The check-ins provide opportunities for individuals to connect with other search advocates, to discuss the current state of searches and hiring across the system, to collaborate on materials, to share resources and best practices, to mutually learn from each other's expertise and to share updates, successes and challenges.

Groups audience:

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Source URL:<https://www.cu.edu/dei/programs-and-events/university-colorado-search-advocates>

Links

[1] <https://www.cu.edu/dei/programs-and-events/university-colorado-search-advocates>

[2] <https://searchadvocate.oregonstate.edu/>