



# Beyond the Echo Chamber: Creating a More Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive Nuclear Weapons Policy Field

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## Executive Summary

The nuclear weapons policy field has been defined by the effect of nuclear weapons production, use, and testing on indigenous communities of colour, demonstrating the exclusionary and inequitable nature of the field. This imbalance in power separating the communities whose bodies, land, and future have been irreversibly marked by the nuclear weapons complex from nuclear decision-makers has resulted in the historically homogenous practitioners and exclusionary treatment of certain demographics, including women, indigenous communities, and the LGBTQ+ population. Furthermore, research into the inequity of the nuclear weapons policy field and critiques of the nuclear status quo have been disproportionately focused on North American and Western European socio-economic contexts, and siloed analyses focused on singular characteristics like gender and geography. The imbalance in power mentioned, can be attributed to several factors that have contributed to the exclusion and marginalisation of certain communities in the nuclear

weapons complex and decision-making processes, for instance, lack of gender diversity, representation of indigenous communities, geographical bias, and the exclusion of the LGBTQ+ community. To effectively address this imbalance of power, policies that aim to combat homogeneity, unfair treatment, and exclusionary practices require sustainable and targeted efforts to make the field more equitable, diverse, and inclusive. These initiatives will not only improve the workforce composition and outcomes of organisations that implement them, but also ensure that the decisions made by those in power are considerate of all the stakeholders impacted by the nuclear weapons field.

## Introduction

Increasing EDI in the nuclear weapons space is a smart policy to improve outcomes, increase stakeholder engagement, effectively reduce the harm inflicted on people by nuclear weapons, and to facilitate disarmament. It is beneficial because it offers comprehensive perspectives, addresses systemic inequities, increases stakeholder engagement, facilitates a holistic approach to harm reduction and enhances legitimacy and trust. Participation and influence in nuclear weapons policy making and diplomacy were historically restricted to white men in North America and Europe, reflecting legacies of colonialism and imperialism that translate into the inequitable dynamics of the nuclear weapons field today.<sup>75</sup> The exclusion of women, people of colour, LGBTQ+ people, and other communities has produced a nuclear weapons policy that is poorly informed, innovation-resistant, and ill-suited for reducing nuclear risk and harm and for advancing disarmament. This, even before considering the ethical implications of excluding diverse voices in nuclear weapons policy making, especially those most affected by nuclear weapons development, testing, and use. Exclusion prevents decision-makers from tapping into the scientifically demonstrated benefits that diversity offers for improving policy outcomes. In short, exclusion is not only problematic, but also damaging to organisations and institutions that fail to address it.

A successful approach to nuclear risk reduction, arms control, disarmament, and non-proliferation recognises that eliminating systemic exclusion and structural inequities in the nuclear weapons space will also change how security is conceptualised and which characteristics of experts and leaders are seen as desirable. As UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs Izumi Nakamitsu said at the 10th Review Conference on the NPT, EDI is not a question of equity alone, but also of redrawing the traditional nuclear security and disarmament discourse.

This paper identifies the enduring structural inequities in the nuclear weapons space. Along with examples of indigenous peoples, LGBTQ+ people, women, and non-Western voices. It illustrates how they have been systematically excluded from nuclear weapons policy making and diplomacy, the harm this has caused, and how nuclear weapons diminish rather than ensure human security. The paper argues that the lack of EDI among nuclear weapons policy makers has perpetuated thinking that fuels nuclear arms races, discourages critical reflection and change, and disincentivises disarmament. Finally, it demonstrates that EDI is a useful tool for improving nuclear weapons policymaking processes and their outcomes.

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<sup>75</sup> Sylvia Mishra and Wardah Amir *Racial Inequalities and Nuclear Policy*, (Muscatine: Stanley Center, 2022): <https://stanleycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/CRNW-SPC21-AB-2-1-22.pdf>



## Defining Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

While considerable work on equity, diversity, and inclusion has been undertaken, most studies examine corporate environments and are centred on North American and Western European understandings of these values. To understand what these characteristics mean in the nuclear weapons policy making field and community of practitioners, it is essential to establish a common baseline for these values and their implications.

**Equity** speaks to 'fair treatment for all people so that the norms, practises, and policies in place ensure identity is not predictive of opportunities or workplace outcomes.'<sup>76</sup> This takes into account the unique circumstances faced by an individual in their endeavour to enter the nuclear weapons policy field, their lived experience working in the community of practitioners, and ensuring that their treatment is tailored to their needs, instead of a 'one-size-fits-all' approach.<sup>77</sup>

**Diversity** refers to 'who is represented in the [nuclear] workforce,' including characteristics like gender, race, age, physical ability, or socioeconomic status.<sup>78</sup>

**Inclusion** examines 'how the [nuclear weapons policy community of practitioners] experiences the workplace and the degree to which [nuclear] organisations embrace all employees and enable them to make meaningful contributions'.<sup>79</sup> 'Inclusion in this context means examining if all employees feel that their voices are heard, contributions valued, and concerns taken seriously'.<sup>80</sup>

## The Nuclear Orthodoxy

This section contextualises exclusion and homogeneity in the nuclear field. The fallacies of the 'nuclear orthodoxy' — a canon of theories like deterrence, crisis stability, and mutually assured destruction — have long been demonstrated.<sup>81</sup> These include fundamental knowledge gaps regarding the human decision-making processes deterrence is based on, and its neglect of the severe risks of accidental or unintended nuclear use.<sup>82</sup> Yet nuclear orthodoxy remains at the heart of nuclear weapons decision-making. It has been perpetuated by the homogenous policy communities shaping nuclear posture, arsenal development, and deterrence strategy. Senior members in the nuclear field attest to the centrality of personal connections for professional success in the nuclear weapons space.<sup>83</sup> Given the confirmation bias of its members, by which people are more attentive to others similar to them, the 'priesthood' of US defence and military officials working on nuclear posture and deterrence policy has traditionally underrepresented young people, women, people of colour, and simply those

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<sup>76</sup> McKinsey & Company, 'What is diversity, equity, and inclusion?' in *Featured Insights* (August 17, 2022): <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/mckinsey-explainers/what-is-diversity-equity-and-inclusion#/>

<sup>77</sup> Sneha Nair, 'Converging Goals: Examining the Intersection Between Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and Nuclear Security Implementation,' in *Nuclear Threat Initiative's 16th Global Dialogue on Nuclear Security Priorities* (April 2023)

<sup>78</sup> McKinsey & Company, 'What is diversity, equity, and inclusion?'; Nair, 'Converging Goals'

<sup>79</sup> McKinsey & Company, 'What is diversity, equity, and inclusion?'; Nair, 'Converging Goals'

<sup>80</sup> Nair, 'Converging Goals'

<sup>81</sup> Heather Hurlburt et al., 'The 'Consensual Straitjacket': Four Decades of Women in Nuclear Security', *New America*, March 5, 2019, <https://www.newamerica.org/political-reform/reports/the-consensual-straitjacket-four-decades-of-women-in-nuclear-security/>.

<sup>82</sup> Ward Wilson, 'Reconsidering nuclear deterrence', *European Leadership Network*, March 1, 2022, <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/commentary/reconsidering-nuclear-deterrence/>.

<sup>83</sup> Hurlburt et al., 'The 'Consensual Straitjacket''

with outside experience, as they are less likely to be identified as desirable talent. The 'priesthood', is 'closed-off and highly hierarchical, tending to value long experience and insider knowledge over innovation'.<sup>84</sup>

Findings from psychology and behavioural science show that homogeneous teams are more prone to misunderstanding the task at hand and making errors.<sup>85</sup> They are less likely to re-examine their working methods and baseline assumptions, increasing the risk of systematic fallacies. This is because they penalise new or divergent views with exclusion from the group, promote groupthink, and stifle innovation.

Altogether, the lack of EDI in nuclear weapons policy making reduces innovation and problem-solving potential; it excludes and diminishes the qualities and expertise offered by traditionally underrepresented actors and wastes valuable human capital that is crucial for sound decision-making. In this context, leaders must understand EDI as an important, legitimate policy tool for creating effective solutions to contemporary security challenges, and not simply a 'nice-to-have' human resources policy.

## Analysis

### 1. Structural Inequity and Exclusion in the Nuclear Weapons Space

#### Indigenous Communities

Since the earliest days of the Manhattan Project, nuclear weapons development, production, and testing have always displayed patterns of inequality. As 70% of the world's uranium deposits are found on native lands, their extraction and exploitation in the name of 'national defence' points to the inherent 'radioactive colonialism' that stands in stark contrast to the protection of human rights and the environment.<sup>86</sup> From the Navajo Nation in the United States to the tribal plains of Jaduguda in India, the lives of indigenous communities worldwide have been severely impacted by the nuclear weapons industry, including uranium mining, milling, enrichment, and nuclear waste storage and disposal. In Australia, for example, indigenous communities in the Northern Territory have been hurt by uranium mining operations since the 1950s, leading to significant environmental degradation and health conditions.<sup>87</sup> The ardent neglect and abandonment of these communities are reflected in the inequitable distribution of pollution. They are a result of biased policies that side-line the experiences of indigenous communities to fulfil the priorities of those in power.

The asymmetrical power distribution, misrepresentation of the legacy of radioactive contamination, and narrative constructed by decision-makers in the field have facilitated this exploitation of indigenous peoples in the name of 'national security', even though these most vulnerable groups require the state's protection.<sup>88</sup> The root cause of these injustices is the absence and exclusion of indigenous people from national policymaking and international diplomacy around nuclear weapons. Even during the NPT negotiations in the 1960s, indigenous peoples were not consulted or represented, despite the significant impact that nuclear weapons

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<sup>84</sup> Hurlburt et al., 'The 'Consensual Straitjacket''

<sup>85</sup> David Rock and Heidi Grant, 'Why Diverse Teams Are Smarter', Harvard Business Review, November 4, 2016, <https://hbr.org/2020/11/getting-serious-about-diversity-enough-already-with-the-business-case>.

<sup>86</sup> Geordan Graetz, 'Energy for Whom? Uranium Mining, Indigenous People, and Navigating Risk and Rights in Australia.' *Energy Research & Social Science* 8 (2015): 113–26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2015.05.006>.

<sup>87</sup> Valerie Taliman, 'Healing Global Wounds.' *Race, Poverty & the Environment* 3, no. 3 (1992): 18–19. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41554085>.

<sup>88</sup> Mishra and Amir *Racial Inequalities and Nuclear Policy*.

testing and production had on their communities. This shows that the lack of representation of marginalised groups and their participation in the nuclear decision-making process has a considerable effect on their continued marginalisation through nuclear weapons policies.

## LGBTQ+ People

There is very little LGBTQ+ participation in nuclear weapons policy making and diplomacy. Historically, LGBTQ+ people have been extremely present in the anti-militarism movement,<sup>89</sup> and have been leading efforts toward nuclear disarmament. Notably, the Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp, a group that was established to protest the British government's storage of US nuclear missiles in the United Kingdom, was led by lesbian activists.<sup>90</sup> The LGBTQ+ community is still deeply involved in disarmament activism. Examples of this include LGBTQ+ leadership on nuclear weapons research, as exemplified by Ray Acheson, Director of Reaching Critical Will, as well as disarmament activism, e.g., by International Queers Against Nukes, who are LGBTQ+ activists with International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN). However, there are still some disparities that exist when it comes to the representation of LGBTQ+ people in the nuclear weapons policy sphere. The disparities can be explained by several barriers, including but not limited to: LGBTQ+ people's refusal to participate in nuclear weapons policy making due to anti-militarist convictions or a refusal to work in spaces affected by heteronormativity and sexism; fear of coming out when working in national security; and governments and civil society organisations' incapacity to attract LGBTQ+ people.<sup>91</sup>

Regarding the first two reasons, they relate to individual choices and systemic and structural changes. However, governments and NGOs need to put more effort into attracting LGBTQ+ people, creating a safe space for minorities working in the nuclear weapons policy field, and ensuring that perceived security risks or incompatibilities between the LGBTQ+ community and the traditional notions of masculinity associated with security work and nuclear weapons do not result in discriminatory exclusion from certain jobs. It is due to these biases and assumptions about risk and behaviours associated with the LGBTQ+ community, exacerbated by decision-makers in the nuclear weapons policy community, that LGBTQ+ people working in the nuclear weapons space are consciously less visible, more conformist, and adopt behaviours contrary to those informed by their identities and life experiences to avoid stereotypes and associated exclusion from certain roles and opportunities.

Empowering LGBTQ+ members of the nuclear weapons policy community also improves policy outcomes for organisations and the wider field as a whole. LGBTQ+ people, through their lived experiences, can better communicate with broader audiences, know how to listen to different opinions, and know how to defend their opinions more diplomatically.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Ray Acheson, *Banning the Bomb, Smashing the Patriarchy* (2021)

<sup>90</sup> Lily Wakefield, 'Meet the activists who founded an anti-nuclear lesbian utopia in the throes of the Cold War' *PinkNews*. (October 19, 2021) <https://www.thepinknews.com/2021/10/19/greenham-common-peace-camp-lesbian/>

<sup>91</sup> Carol Cohn, *Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defence Intellectuals*, (1987)

<sup>92</sup> Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, *LGBT+ Identity in the Nuclear Weapons Space*, (Vienna: VCDNP, 2022); <https://vcdnp.org/lgbt-identity-in-nuclear-weapons-space/>

## Women

Gender parity is far from being achieved in the nuclear weapons field. In most panels on nuclear weapons, outside of those focused on feminist perspectives, men will outnumber women.<sup>93</sup> This is, however, a structural issue rather than one that can be fixed with short-term policies. Indeed, despite inviting as many women as men to conferences, the gender balance will still favour men, for many reasons, to name a few: women often have childcare responsibilities and cannot travel as easily or attend Zoom conferences after working hours, and the few women in the field are so often invited that they have to decline many invitations. For example, during the NPT review conference in August 2022, less than 1 in 5 (18%) heads of delegations to the NPT Review Conference were women, compared to 22% at the 2015 Review Conference.<sup>94</sup> Simply speaking, the pool of women experts to invite is smaller, thus making their participation rarer – demonstrating that the issue of gender parity requires more structural changes than simply adding women to the mix, if sustainable and expanding participation of women is truly the goal.

While many describe working in this community as 'draining' or 'restricting,' they feel pressure to prove their credentials. For women, working in such environments can be extremely challenging. Without a critical mass of diverse colleagues, explicit and implicit expectations of how women or people of colour should act can become difficult to navigate and cause significant stress. Senior US women in the nuclear weapons space describe having to perform the 'constant mental and emotional calculus that comes with implicit sexism [...] and gendered expectations', and stated that 'adopting stereotypically masculine traits [firm demeanour and assertiveness] was crucial to success.'<sup>95</sup> This trend is further exacerbated when considered in the context of gendered language in nuclear weapons treaties that construct women as 'others.'<sup>96</sup>

Women spend significant time and energy walking this tightrope and experience imposter syndrome and self-censorship as a result. Attempts to drown out gendered expectations and discrimination by working extreme hours and being over-competent lead many to feel dissatisfied and burned out, and eventually to leave the field. This ensures the continuation of the reality and idea of nuclear weapons policy as a white, male space, illustrated by gender-coded language describing experts as 'greybeards' or 'silverbacks'.<sup>97</sup>

## Non-Western Voices

Understanding the barriers to participation, retention, and advancement of historically excluded communities in the nuclear field is crucial in pursuing the successful implementation of EDI.<sup>98</sup> As the field slowly diversifies to include groups that were previously marginalised, there is a risk of experiencing a sense of social exclusion and isolation, as well as tokenism for examples if they are the only black person in the organisation or a specific

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<sup>93</sup> Alexandra Bell and Kelsey Davenport, 'Behold, The Marticle (A Primer on How to Avoid Quoting Only Men as Sources),' *Poynter* (April 30, 2018): <https://www.poynter.org/newsletters/2018/behold-the-marticle-a-primer-on-how-to-avoid-only-quoting-men-as-sources/>

<sup>94</sup> UNODA, *Stepping it up for diversity, equity and inclusion at the NPT RevCon* (2022): <https://www.un.org/disarmament/update/stepping-it-up-for-diversity-equity-and-inclusion-at-the-npt-review-conference/>

<sup>95</sup> Hurlburt et al., 'The 'Consensual Straitjacket''

<sup>96</sup> Laura Rose Brown, Laura Considine, 'Examining 'gender-sensitive' approaches to nuclear weapons policy: a study of the Non-Proliferation Treaty,' *International Affairs*, Volume 98, Issue 4, (July 2022), Pages 1249–1266, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ia/iia114>

<sup>97</sup> Hurlburt et al., 'The 'Consensual Straitjacket''

<sup>98</sup> Laura Grindstaff, 'Barriers to Inclusion: Social Roots and Current Concerns' in *Uprooting Bias in the Academy* (eds) Bisson, L.F., Grindstaff, L., Brazil-Cruz, L., Barbu, S.J., (Springer, Cham: 2022): [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-85668-7\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-85668-7_2)

department within the organisation – thus placing minority workers in a position where they are asked to act as a representative of their entire community or the entire community of minority employees to their organisation.

Nuclear arms control is a small and narrow field. It offers limited career options that are usually highly competitive but mostly in a non-career format where positions are temporary with varying benefits. On the one hand, this uncertainty could make the field less appealing to the communities in the Global South who would expect stability and societal improvement from such a demanding field. As a result, the field's ability to attract talents and retain expertise is in crisis, and the prospects of achieving inclusion and diversity are also in crisis. On the other hand, governments find excuses in limited resources to justify lacking progress on EDI.

It is hard for the Global South's candidates to participate in international forums beyond governmental positions. Candidates from the Global North are usually more likely to assume the positions offered by international organisations. This creates an even wider gap between the haves (candidates from the Global North) and the have-nots (candidates from the Global South). This bias toward Global North candidates is encouraged by centralising nuclear policy organisations and programmes geographically in the Global North and overlooking the challenges imposed by visa and work permit requirements for candidates from the Global South. Based on the previous examples, it can be argued that the structural and systematic biases that have been lodged over a period of time still affect EDI in that the scales of opportunity on the international level are always tipped in favour of candidates in the Global North. There might be a legitimate need for EDI policy among various nuclear and disarmament organisations, but if the root constraints to the lack of EDI are not first dealt with, EDI will remain a flight of fancy.

## 2. EDI as a Tool for Improving Outcomes

Diversity is a complex phenomenon that requires structural change and skilled management to have a positive effect. Thus, for one to better understand the psychology behind it there should be developed accurate, evidence-based, persuasive arguments for diversity, and maximise its benefits for decision-making on nuclear weapons. Diverse teams are less likely to make mistakes because they frequently re-examine assumptions and evidence.<sup>99</sup> Where errors happen, they are more likely to be addressed in the discussion. Diversity increases team members' accountability. Diverse teams also make more accurate decisions.<sup>100</sup> Diversifying the workforce promotes innovation, performance, talent, and diversity of views, thus improving a nuclear organisation's outcomes and increasing profitability.<sup>101</sup> By encouraging critical thinking and discussion, diversity helps teams avoid mistakes.

Resistance to EDI in the nuclear field has often been justified by high-level decision-makers as a risk to the status quo, citing challenges in reaching international consensus on language around gender and geographic diversity as examples of the struggles ahead, and the need to prioritise *substantive* issues rather than EDI as a *social* grievance.<sup>102</sup> What this critique fails to consider is the risk that comes with a homogeneity of decision-makers and practitioners in the nuclear field. A lack of diversity is a legitimate vulnerability for nuclear security

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<sup>99</sup> David Rock and Heidi Grant, 'Why Diverse Teams Are Smarter', *Harvard Business Review*, November 4, 2016, <https://hbr.org/2020/11/getting-serious-about-diversity-enough-already-with-the-business-case>.

<sup>100</sup> Katherine Phillips, 'How Diversity Makes Us Smarter', *University of California, Berkeley*, September 18, 2017, [https://greatertgood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how\\_diversity\\_makes\\_us\\_smarter#:~:text=Research](https://greatertgood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_diversity_makes_us_smarter#:~:text=Research).

<sup>101</sup> WINS, *Advancing Gender Parity in Nuclear Security* (March 23, 2021): pp. 8-12, <https://www.wins.org/document/advancing-gender-parity-in-nuclear-security/>

<sup>102</sup> Nair, *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Nuclear Security Culture*.

and policy making. The homogeneity of individuals and decision-makers in the nuclear field creates risk through associated bias, which prevents an individual from seeing members of one's own group as a potential threat. By creating a more inclusive nuclear decision-making process that represents a broader range of perspectives when defining risk, practitioners will be operating with a more expansive definition of who or what constitutes a 'threat' to nuclear security – improving nuclear security implementation overall.<sup>103</sup> An example of an existing risk to nuclear security is the accelerationist threat posed by some white supremacist groups with nuclear ambitions.<sup>104</sup> These extremist threats may go undetected if a white-majority workforce does not perceive white supremacist groups and their ideological motivation as a relevant threat to their nuclear security mission.<sup>105</sup>

Ensuring a diverse workforce composition can help mitigate bias to prevent characteristics like race or gender from being used as the sole basis for threat identification.<sup>106</sup> Diversity alone is not enough. The organisational culture of a workplace also must create the space for diverse and differing opinions and perspectives to be heard or included, to ensure that the merits of diversity are felt by an organisation. In an organisation that wants to benefit from diversity, all staff must be able to openly discuss hierarchies and work processes, shape the agenda, influence strategy and policy, exercise leadership, and receive recognition and reward.<sup>107</sup> Organisations that are more open-minded are likely to listen to concerns and create a better, non-toxic work environment, which can also improve worker performance and organisational outcomes. A key step in creating these conditions is investigating how the organisation's structures and culture have allocated opportunities, influence, and rewards through bias.<sup>108</sup> Often, this is because leaders recognise and remember talented staff more quickly when they can identify with them. This leads diverse staff to be excluded from the opportunities they need for promotions and leaves significant leadership and substantive potential untapped.

## Policy Recommendations

It is crucial to acknowledge bias as the root cause of homogenous workforce composition, unfair participation, and the exclusion of certain demographics from the nuclear weapons policy field. Structural biases based on gender, race, and other characteristics can result in assumptions about candidates' performance, suitability for the role, or culture fit that can serve as barriers to entry into the field and have prevented the participation of historically marginalised communities in the workforce and from acting as knowledge producers in the field. These biases produce recruitment, retention, and advancement challenges for minority personnel working in

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<sup>103</sup> Sneha Nair, *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Nuclear Security Culture: Insider Threat Assessments at Nuclear Facilities*, (Washington D.C.: INMM and the Stimson Center, 2022) [https://www.stimson.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/209\\_INMM\\_Diversity-Equity-and-Inclusion-in-Nuclear-Security-Culture-Insider-Threat-Assessments-at-Nuclear-Facilities\\_final.pdf](https://www.stimson.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/08/209_INMM_Diversity-Equity-and-Inclusion-in-Nuclear-Security-Culture-Insider-Threat-Assessments-at-Nuclear-Facilities_final.pdf)

<sup>104</sup> Rebecca L. Earnhardt, Brendan Hyatt, Nickolas Roth, 'A threat to confront: far-right extremists and nuclear terrorism,' *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, (January 14, 2021), <https://thebulletin.org/2021/01/a-threat-to-confront-far-right-extremists-and-nuclear-terrorism/>

<sup>105</sup> Earnhardt, Hyatt, Roth, 'A threat to confront.' <https://thebulletin.org/2021/01/a-threat-to-confront-far-right-extremists-and-nuclear-terrorism/>

<sup>106</sup> Nair, *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Nuclear Security Culture*.

<sup>107</sup> Sylvia Ann Hewlett, Melinda Marshall, and Laura Sherbin, 'How Diversity Can Drive Innovation', *Harvard Business Review*, December 2013, <https://hbr.org/2013/12/how-diversity-can-drive-innovation>.

<sup>108</sup> Robin Ely and David Thomas, 'Getting Serious About Diversity: Enough Already with the Business Case', *Harvard Business Review*, November/December 2020, <https://hbr.org/2020/11/getting-serious-about-diversity-enough-already-with-the-business-case>.



the field, and policies that address the root causes of these challenges must aim to advance EDI into the community of practitioners, the procedures in place, and the power structures that govern the field.

- Examine workplace structures for bias and activate social accountability to identify and eliminate bias, enabling EDI in nuclear weapons policy from the top-down.
- Implement collective, team-based bias assessments and learning activities. These are essential for improving performance and morale by addressing the root causes of DEI issues. It strengthens relationships, increases team resilience, and improves problem-solving. Individuals in leadership positions and knowledge management must work to implement these changes.
- Facilitate broader organisational change and change cognitive rules to implement effective EDI measures. Stigmatising resistance allows resisters to perceive the change or 'unlearning' process as the problem. Diversity leaders should address resisters' psychological needs for acceptance, positive self-image, and inclusion in the change process.
- Avoid boiler-plate EDI measures: Rather implement collaborative solutions that utilise cognitive dissonance to create a diverse and inclusive workplace include EDI-focused recruitment, mentoring programmes, and task forces.
- Advance EDI in recruitment, retention, and promotion of personnel in the nuclear weapons policy community to ensure that diverse talent (women, indigenous folks, or other minority communities) is not deterred from entering a field that lacks leaders. Hiring managers, supervisors, and those in leadership must ensure that EDI initiatives focus on all three facets of personnel to support minority and marginalised communities, essential for sustainable change.
- Tailor EDI initiatives to a broad range of stakeholders. This includes civil society, diplomats, practitioners at facilities, and decision-makers in the nuclear weapons policy community. Efforts to advance EDI in the field needing to be targeted across different roles, responsibilities, and seniority of different community members.
- Engage stakeholders from the Global South in serious discussions on EDI to bridge the gap between different perspectives and accounting for unique region-specific, cultural, and demographic challenges. Non-nuclear weapon states should be equitably included in high-level dialogues and discussions about nuclear weapons policy to ensure their voices are represented.
- Reflect commitments to EDI in hiring practices. Nuclear non-proliferation organisations and think tanks should avoid tokenism, as it is counterproductive to the goal of EDI. Decision-makers and hiring managers at nuclear weapons policy organisations must ensure that EDI initiatives address root causes of exclusion and discriminatory practices to be effective.
- Broaden understanding of EDI and initiatives for implementation are essential for diversifying the nuclear weapons policy field to account for all, including women, indigenous communities, LGBTQ+ people, and those with disabilities.

## Conclusion

Making the nuclear weapons policy field more diverse, equitable, and inclusive is an essential shift for the field and community of practitioners. Mainstreaming EDI into the field creates a better understanding of policy outcomes. In a scenario where use of nuclear weapons are being considered, ensuring a common understanding of EDI fully centres the potential impact on affected communities for the development of nuclear weapons, the consequences of nuclear weapons use on communities, and the range of security and

humanitarian arguments for disarmament and non-proliferation. EDI does not unilaterally discount the security concerns of the deterrence argument, but rather, ensures that a complete picture of potential use impact is considered by policymakers, the consequences of pursuing nuclear weapons development by non-nuclear weapon states, and the prospective merits and impacts of disarmament. The nuclear policy space needs to realise that diversity begets diversity, and a lack of diversity sustains a lack of diversity. Leaders must create conditions that sustainably increase EDI's positive effects on behaviour and collaboration and reduce stereotyping and conflict to improve outcomes in the nuclear weapons policy field and the community of practitioners.