

# **The Super Fabulous WomenAlsoKnowStuff Handbook Or, How to Fight Implicit Bias in Your Spare Time**

## **The WomenAlsoKnowStuff 2019-20 Executive Board:**

**Amber Boydston (UC-Davis), Nadia Brown (Purdue), Kim Yi Dionne (UC-Riverside), Samara Klar (Arizona), Yanna Krupnikov (Stony Brook), Melissa R. Michelson (Menlo College), Kerri Milita (Illinois State), Layna Mosley (UNC), Stella Rouse (Maryland), Kathleen Searles (LSU), Christina Wolbrecht (Notre Dame)**

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Almost immediately after launching the WomenAlsoKnowStuff initiative, we began to receive inquiries from women in other professions asking us to expand the site beyond political science. While we choose to retain our original focus, we see these requests as clear evidence of the need for parallel efforts in other fields and for other marginalized groups, including women in other disciplines, people of color, members of the LGBTQ community, and members of the disability community. In order to help like-minded initiatives to promote visibility and inclusion of underrepresented scholars, this handbook documents our efforts and offers a how-to manual for use by others. We do not expect that any other initiative will want to follow our structure or approach exactly. Rather, we hope that our experience and hard-earned lessons can ease the path for others with similar goals.

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## 1. THE WomenAlsoKnowStuff ORIGIN STORY

### **How We Got Here**

In February 2016, our founder, Samara Klar, received a conference program with a nearly all-male lineup and, on the same day, read a news article asking six (white male) political scientists for their views on the U.S. election. In frustration, Samara created a bare-bones WordPress blog site and emailed her women political science friends inviting them to add their own information and to forward the email to other potentially interested women. The initial response was overwhelming. Within a week it was clear that the desire for such a project was huge, but that the site would need more hands-on management (and maybe not a shared password). Quickly, nine other women agreed to become members of a founding executive board. Initial goals included improvement of the website, increased visibility, and development of a grant proposal to support ongoing efforts.

There were some growing pains. Shifting to a centralized system of adding women to the site, rather than globally sharing the password, allowed us to ensure that only women political scientists were added and that women were only adding themselves (rather than adding others without their consent), but it also meant we suddenly needed a way to process and post the massive influx of applications. After a few forays into possible solutions, such as simply investing hours of our own (or our research assistants') time adding names, we moved to a new website that included a mechanism for women to add and edit their own listings and a more narrow set of research expertise categories, based on APSA organized sections (for further information see Section 10, Website).

Another challenge was facing our own implicit biases. However inadvertently, our initial board had limited racial and ethnic diversity. As soon as we noticed this oversight, existing board members enthusiastically and unanimously agreed to extend invitations to two additional women of color to join the board. Both of these invitations were accepted, and our work was much improved as a result. As the board has continued to expand and change, we continue to monitor our own biases and networks with the goal of a more diverse and representative board across a number of dimensions.

With an established board, the massive amount of work associated with the project's goals was more easily shared (though still representing a sizeable workload for each of us). Women with expertise in website programming took on that role, while those with expertise in social media focused on developing a Twitter presence. Other women branched off to work on a proposal to the National Science Foundation, while others refined the group's logo and branding. Individual board members conducted interviews with various media outlets, and wrote blog posts for the Conversation, the Washington Post's Monkey Cage, and the Huffington Post, to name just a few. After months of operating through mostly informal subcommittees and ad hoc conference calls, we developed a codified set of by-laws.

As the project became more visible, there were requests for us to expand our scope, such as to non-political scientists and to non-academics, or to include other underrepresented groups in political science such as people of color or members of the LGBT community. While we wholeheartedly concur that implicit bias also negatively impacts members of these groups and other disciplines, we decided to retain our specific focus on political scientists who identify as women. At the same time, since founding

WomenAlsoKnowStuff our goal has been to produce a how-to manual for others that describes our project and allows them to launch similar initiatives to raise the visibility and inclusion of other underrepresented voices—which you now hold in your hands. We have been thrilled to see the development of resources for scholars of color (@POCAlsoKnow) and LGBTQ scholars (@LGBTscholars), as well as the creation of “women also know” projects in a range of other disciplines (see our website for the most up-to-date list).

Everything about the project—website, Twitter account, branding, swag—has been the product of trial and error, and lots and lots and lots of discussion among board members. With respect to the website itself, we are constantly struggling to maximize its effectiveness and utility, initially with limited technical expertise and no source of funding upon which to rely. Together we have developed a mission statement for our initiative that guides our work, deliberated about the tone and purpose of our social media voice, and even given careful consideration to visual identity and “brand.” Initial consensus on a stack of binders (thanks, Mitt Romney) soon gave way to a more non-partisan visual incorporating a light bulb.

In 2018, we were delighted to receive a grant from the National Science Foundation EAGER program to support our efforts to diversify and advance the discipline of political science. The timing was fortuitous as the WomenAlsoKnowStuff project was increasingly straining our resources and sanity. These funds made it possible for board members to meet in person for the first time to do the hard work of developing a long-term vision and constructing a new structure to help us accomplish our goals effectively, without (as much) burnout. The NSF grant also funded a complete overhaul of our website, dramatically improving its functionality, ease of use, and effectiveness (see more on the current site below). NSF funding allowed us to employ graduate RAs to improve and expand our social media strategy (and to take some of the day-to-day burden off of us), to pilot special initiatives, and assist with impact studies. As that last task indicates, a portion of the NSF funding supports an on-going impact study project, with the goal of determining (and improving) our impact and effectiveness. Results will be made available to the public, through publications and our website.

In 2019, we were privileged to receive support from The Democracy Fund. This funding supports the creation of this handbook (expanding our impact beyond our own discipline) as well as a program of outreach to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HCIs), and community colleges.

The reorganization of the WomenAlsoKnowStuff structure we put into place after our first (January 2019) retreat prioritized, among other things, grantmaking activity. We continue to pursue additional outlets for support for our efforts, recognizing that we have long since reached the limit of what our volunteer hours can do.

### **The Personal Side**

The development of our initiative has been fueled by—and has fueled—many internal discussions and ponderings about gender and the academic profession. Our first (video) conference call was held the only time we were all available—late at night, with nearly half the editorial board sporting pajamas. This call

was just one instance of the mix of dedication and honesty that has buoyed our efforts. We have had long conversations about how to move forward on issues ranging from how much effort we should put into responding to individual journalists' queries to which features are most important for the search function on the website. We also have shared stories about our experiences as women in this profession—the need to find a private space in which to pump breastmilk while traveling, the pressure to have a drink during an on-campus interview to demonstrate to prospective employers that one is not pregnant, and the degree of support (or lack thereof) from our respective institutions.

These latter conversations, often incorporating considerable humor and flurries of hashtags, are part of what has made the project so fulfilling. Coming together as a group of strong, knowledgeable women to share our experiences of implicit bias, outright sexism, and bean-counting bureaucrats, has helped to relieve the stress of those challenges. This is yet another aim of the WomenAlsoKnowStuff initiative: to bring women in the profession together in solidarity and strength.

Given the time commitments this work has required we sometimes ask ourselves why are we doing it. Every one of us has considered dropping off the board, and a number of our original board members have in fact done so, wisely recognizing the limits of their own time and effort at any one time. We also often wonder why members of the “harmed” group (women in the discipline) are the ones doing the work to fix that harm. The answer for those of us who continue to work behind the scenes at WomenAlsoKnowStuff is simply that we find this work to be one of the most rewarding projects that we have been part of as academics.

We are changing the profession into one where we want to be and feel like we belong: one that is inclusive and is committed to diversity. This work reminds us that the state of our discipline is not static, but with collective effort, it is changing for the better. It allows us to give back to those who paved the way and made our own careers possible (both women and men), and pay it forward to the next generation of women political scientists. We are proud to be part of a group that is confronting professional and popular biases head on, in a classically feminine fashion: by being helpful.

The work has also brought us personal rewards. The work nurtures our souls, providing us with support and inspiration to do our other professional work. We have formed bonds with one another and also with other women in the discipline that we have met because of this project. We are building our networks and feeling more connected, building a community that makes us personally happier and more fulfilled.

### **Our goals**

During our first in-person meeting (i.e., nearly two YEARS into our work as an organization), we worked with an organizational coach who led us through an intense brainstorming session about our vision. Working as we had been, in reactive mode since the unexpected success of the first WordPress site, we had not had the time to stop and contemplate. We had been operating under the working goal of helping women's representation in political science, presumably for the sake of female political scientists, although we had never codified our goal as such. Indeed, the ambiguous nature of this goal helps explain, in retrospect, why the early decisions about our scope and our brand were not always easy to make. But by the end of our brainstorming session, we arrived at our core goal: The mission of

WomenAlsoKnowStuff is to promote the expertise of women **for political science**. We want political science to be better, for everyone's sake. Ignoring or dismissing the work of women political scientists is bad for the entire discipline and the knowledge it yields. Our research and teaching will be better if we take advantage of the best possible scholarship, regardless of the gender of the author.

There is much to be done to counter sex bias in political science, the academy, and the world. Our contribution is to counter implicit bias among political scientists through our website, Twitter account, and publicity (aka, swag) that facilitates the discovery and use of political science scholarship by women. Ultimately, our markers of success include greater gender equity on syllabi, in book and journal article citations, on conference panels, and for invited talks.

We were gratified and encouraged to receive an email from then-APSA President-Elect David A. Lake early on in the project's development:

Thank you for putting together the website "WomenAlsoKnowStuff." I just happily spent the afternoon going through your expert lists. On the penultimate draft of a paper where I needed to make sure I cited all the relevant materials, I just worked my way down your list of experts on civil conflict. Slapping my forehead numerous times, I kept repeating "of course I need to cite that." By the end, my reference list changed from 2/3 male to 50-50 male/female. I may have slighted my male colleagues in this process, but I take this to be fair retribution for years of past negligence. Fantastic resource, for which we are all in your debt.

Our goal is for other political scientists to follow Dr. Lake's lead.

## 2. THE IMPORTANCE OF ESTABLISHING A MISSION AND GOALS

Very quickly after putting up our first website, three things became clear: First, that we needed to avoid any one member of the team taking on too much in terms of commitments of her time. Second, that we needed to establish boundaries for whom we would include; for instance, was the website intended for female academics in political science only, or could female academics from neighboring disciplines and/or female policy researchers not in academia (e.g., at think tanks) also be included? Third, that we needed to decide exactly how narrow or broad we wanted the scope of our work to be; for instance, if we wanted to advance women in political science, should we welcome collaborations and advocacy with sister organizations, such as #MeTooPoliSci?

For all three of these questions and others, we remembered the airline safety instruction procedures: put on your own mask before assisting others. We realized we can't fight against implicit bias if we drop out of the fight through burnout. So we tried to organize ourselves so that the workload was evenly distributed (this did not always work well!). We decided to keep the population of people eligible for the website relatively focused: self-identifying female scholars in political science, specifically those seeking or already with a PhD in political science, public policy, or international relations. And we decided to keep the scope of our work relatively narrow as well. And, as mentioned above, after a lot of soul-searching (and a two-day workshop working with an organizational consultant), we came to our

mission: to promote the work of women in political science, not only for those women, but for the good of political science as a whole. Having this mission clearly defined was invaluable. We now use it as a litmus test against which to consider whether to pursue X or Y opportunity, and from it we derive the tone and tenor for our communication strategy. For example, we stay positive, not negative, and we try to include men in the conversation about promoting women's research.

### 3. DIVIDE AND CONQUER

Transforming the discipline is a major undertaking, especially when it includes maintaining a complex website and an active social media presence. Given that this work is unpaid or nearly so,<sup>1</sup> and that this work does not contribute to tenure or promotion, the burden of work needs to be shared among a sufficiently large group of individuals. This also allows for individual team members to cycle off as needed due to other projects or life events, without disrupting the ability of the project to continue uninterrupted. Of course, it is also important that the group is not so large to prohibit effective communication and decision-making. Our executive committee has ranged in membership from eight to twelve individuals.

We also have found that, despite our desire for collective governance among the team members, it is useful to assign specific roles and leadership functions. What has worked best for us is a team of three rotating leaders and three committees, each of which has a committee head. The three leaders include the immediate past chair, current chair, and future chair. This allows for there to be a single leader at all times but also for that leader to have two other people to turn to for advice (and to maintain continuity and institutional memory). The three committees then divide up the day-to-day operations. One committee focuses on Communication and Website, one on Social Media, Marketing, and Promotions, and another on Research and Development. Within each committee, individual members of the board have specific roles. Because maintaining an active Twitter presence is a very demanding job, almost every member of the executive committee takes a turn, a week at a time, at running the Twitter feed. Members typically sign up for two weeks total of Twitter duty per semester.

### 4. MARKETING AND PROMOTION

#### **Goals**

Our approach to marketing and promotion is grounded in our mission to promote the work of women political scientists *for* political science. Specifically, we engage in marketing and promotion activities to accomplish the following:

- (1) generate knowledge of and interest in the WomenAlsoKnowStuff project
- (2) drive users to our Twitter account and especially our website
- (3) make our audience aware of the implicit and explicit bias faced by women experts
- (4) counter (im)PLICIT bias by providing images of women as experts and of women's expertise

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<sup>1</sup> WomenAlsoKnowStuff is now able to support its executive committee members with infrequent, modest stipends, using grant funding; but these are small tokens relative to the work involved.

## **Social Media**

WomenAlsoKnowStuff has been active on social media since the very first day that Samara Klar decided to create a database of women experts. Samara shared her project with friends and colleagues via email, and news of the effort very quickly emerged on academic Twitter and Facebook, with multiple RTs and shares. It was through social media, in part, that Samara identified others with a strong interest in the project as the executive board developed.

We were particularly lucky that the early board included members with social media and public engagement experience. Katie Searles is a political communication scholar who designed our Twitter and social media strategy from the bottom up, including helping develop our unique voice, approach, and brand. Katie was—heroically—the sole person behind our Twitter account for the first year, although other board members contributed content and other assistance. As an editor for the popular Washington Post Monkey Cage political science blog, Kim Yi Dionne had/has extensive experience in successful public engagement that has aided our work as well. Virtually all board members had Twitter accounts that they used to various extents and in various ways. After a year, Katie was—to the surprise of no one—approaching burnout, and our Twitter voice was so well established that it became possible for other board members to pitch in on managing Twitter more directly. We discuss our current Twitter strategy in great detail below.

We made the decision early on not to create a WomenAlsoKnowStuff Facebook page. We viewed Facebook as more constrained within social networks, without the more easily public nature of Twitter. We perceived that the members of our audience who are journalists are far more active on Twitter than on Facebook. Also, we were not interested in the work of managing Facebook comment sections. Perhaps most importantly, we felt that our Twitter account was taking off and successful enough that it was the best use of our resources to focus our attention there.

## **Swag**

It is only a slight exaggeration to say that WomenAlsoKnowStuff stumbled onto viral marketing on accident. The first major conference after our founding was the April 2016 Midwest Political Science Association (MPSA) meeting in Chicago. MPSA meetings typically attract around 5,000-7,000 political scientists, as well as a variety of vendors (journals, presses, and so on). This was a natural venue for us to spread the word about our new project beyond our current Twitter base.

Once again, it was Samara Klar who suggested printing up some stickers with our new logo. We weren't sure if anyone would be interested, but decided to be bold and order 500 stickers, which board members could hand out at the conference. In the weeks (days?) leading up to the conference, we announced via Twitter a MPSA hashtag #WomenAlsoMPSA and the fact that our board members would be handing out a limited number of stickers. We encouraged conference attendees to use the hashtag to promote the work of women at the conference.

We were both surprised and delighted by the response. We bought few stickers due to a limited budget and uncertainty about demand, but apparently (as any marketer would tell you) that's a great way to

generate interest and excitement. We were thrilled to have so many colleagues approach us to ask about stickers and to express their gratitude for our project. Sticker sighting became popular on Twitter. This was the first time we had the opportunity to talk directly about WomenAlsoKnowStuff beyond ourselves, and it was both gratifying and inspiring.

Since that fateful 2016 MPSA, we have continued to offer stickers and other swag at conferences (with some limiting rules, as noted below), and as part of special promotions (e.g., gift bags to the 2,000th profile on our website or our 15,000th follower). Continuing to do so, however, has forced us to confront a number of challenges and as with everything else, develop our policy and practice through trial and error. Some key guiding principles:

(1) The purpose of our swag is to make women visible in political science, to encourage Twitter followers and website users, and to confront implicit bias. We (and others) have lots of fun ideas for swag, but we always want to evaluate any idea by asking if it achieves those goals in a cost-effective way.

(2) Swag is distributed at conferences by executive board members. Distributing swag at conferences is a way to directly engage with our central audience, fellow academic political scientists. Part of the strategy of swag is to generate attention and interest by making swag hard to get and something of a “game;” we have declined, for examples, requests for us to simply make swag available at check in or with name tags or to create a WAKS “store.” (Our mantra to help ground us on this front: “We are not Etsy.”) We don’t *just* want our supporters to have swag (although we do want that!); we want them to be posting and talking and seeking swag, all to help spread the WomenAlsoKnowStuff word.

At the same time, we recognize that this policy has some drawbacks. Not all scholars have the resources to attend professional conferences or to spend their precious conference time looking for our swag. For the board, being available to distribute swag means more time demands on crowded conference schedules. In some years, there are important conferences which executive board members do not attend. Twitter promotions and other special projects are another opportunity for folks, including those who do not travel, to get access to swag.

This is our model, but it’s certainly not the only one. For example, we are big fans of how the folks at POCAAlsoKnowStuff have scholars of color on the job market hand out their swag at some conferences, giving swag-seeking scholars the opportunity to learn about up-and-coming scholars.

### **Logo**

One of the first challenges we faced was coming up with a logo. We initially batted around the idea of binders, riffing off of Mitt Romney’s 2012 debate claim that when he was making appointments, he and his staff had “binders full of women” to consider. The first logo for our Twitter account featured a stack of binders. We ultimately decided that a binders logo would require too much explanation, and more importantly, veer into partisanship, which is something we very much seek to avoid.

The lightbulb logo was proposed by one of our board member’s research assistants, and a supporter (a partner of a board member at the time) with some design skills put together a basic logo for us. We

wanted to avoid red or blue (too politically charged) and purple didn't pop enough. We settled on orange as distinctive, bright, and attention-grabbing. Orange is also the color of the UN Women's Division campaign, so we are in good company.

By the time we were planning our new website in Spring 2019, it was clear to us that it was time for a logo refresh. We wanted to keep the lightbulb that had become a recognized symbol of WomenAlsoKnowStuff, but were looking for something more dynamic, fresh, and clean. Through our networks we identified a graphic designer, Jasmine Osorio, who is a woman of color, and paid to have her redesign our logo and associated brand image details (e.g., fonts, color palette). We were delighted to reveal our new logo in August 2019, in anticipation of our new website launch that same month.

Our goals with the logo are an easily identifiable image that connects our work across our website, Twitter, swag, and other projects. We have been particularly pleased with the logo in the form of a small enamel pin. We wanted a way for our colleagues to indicate their support for women in the discipline, particularly at conferences which can be intimidating and unwelcoming. Our supporters loved the stickers, but wanted a way to demonstrate their support for women publicly without their laptops out. In 2018 we created light bulb enamel pins as a special promotion for MPSA, possibly our most successful promotions so far. We have been delighted to see colleagues in political science make those pins a regular part of their conference wardrobe.

## 5. EVALUATING IMPACT

We have worked to evaluate impact in a variety of ways that match the goals of the organization. Below, we list some of the strategies we have used, along with the benefits and drawbacks:

### **Social Media**

Social media provides one of the most workable forms of measuring impact. We have considered the following outcomes:

- Engagement with tweets (e.g. replies, retweets, likes, etc)
- Numbers of followers

These provide clear metrics of reach; as our goal is to promote women having reach via social media is important. At the same time, these metrics may not necessarily determine the full impact of WomenAlsoKnowStuff. As a result, we have turned to additional studies.

### **Women in the Discipline**

To track the effect we have had on the discipline, we have taken the following steps:

- Opportunities for women: We have and are collecting data on the extent to which women are given opportunities such as invited talks (data collected on all talks), citations (collected data on citations), reviewer invitations (through a survey of WomenAlsoKnowStuff members) and conference participation (through a survey of WomenAlsoKnowStuff members).
- Women's career goals: We are using surveys to ask women in the discipline to consider which types of outcomes (that WomenAlsoKnowStuff could potentially affect) would be best for them in their careers.

## **Women in the Media**

To track the effect we have had on women's promotion as experts and sources in the media, we have taken the following steps:

- Survey of Journalists: We used a survey of journalists to track the extent to which they were willing to use our website.
- News outcomes: We focused on one particular media outlet to see the extent to which women appeared in this outlet as sources, and whether these women were listed on our website.
- Survey of members: We are surveying our members to track how often they are asked to be expert sources in media and whether they can tie this to their presence on the website.

## **Additional impact strategies**

- We are tracking searches on our website (e.g. what are people looking for when they come to the website?)
- We are planning a survey of department chairs about their awareness of and the importance of the organization.

## **Some Considerations**

In conducting this work, which we believe has been highly beneficial, there are some issues to consider. First, it is important to acknowledge that WomenAlsoKnowStuff is not randomly assigned to people. In other words, women who choose to be on the website may have different goals and preferences than those who do not choose to be on it, which means that if outcomes differ across those two groups, this may not necessarily be a function of the organization. Second, baselines are often unclear. For example, how many journalist requests *should* a political scientist be getting during a time span of two years? It is difficult to determine whether the organization has been successful because it is unclear what the exact baseline is for success. Finally, these research activities are very costly. Conducting a study of departmental speakers to measure the presence of women required multiple graduate RAs who did months of work. A survey of WomenAlsoKnowStuff members requires the work of a faculty member and a graduate RA. Analyzing impacts is important, but to do so funding structures must be built in grant money *specifically* for this purpose.

## **6. WORK-WORK BALANCE SO EVERYONE STAYS SANE AND INVOLVED**

Every member of the WomenAlsoKnowStuff Board is an expert with top-notch training ... but not in non-profit management. This is a skill we have had to learn as we go. And, as we have learned, a key component is to make sure work is equally distributed and manageable. This is particularly important given that we are unpaid volunteers and that the work we do for WomenAlsoKnowStuff is not often included among the metrics that academic departments use to evaluate our cases for tenure and promotion. Nevertheless, the initiative requires substantial time and effort. Here are strategies we have developed to manage our workload.

With 10-12 board members, we aim to ensure that each member gives no fewer than 10 hours per month and no more than 15 hours per month to WomenAlsoKnowStuff—in other words: about 3 hours per week,

roughly. We arrived at this metric only after several years of figuring out the right balance! This means that we both expect a *minimum* amount of work, so as to avoid shirking, but also a *maximum*, so as to prevent members (particularly those pre-tenure) from over-burdening themselves.

To achieve this goal, we are diligent in distributing tasks and developed a hierarchical structure for accountability. Every year, one member is tasked with being the head of the organization for a one-year term, and another is assigned the role for the following year. These two members, along with the previous board's "head," form a triumvirate that is ultimately charged with ensuring that each member is fulfilling their duties. The board in its entirety is split into 3 sub-committees, each of which carry out a distinct set of duties. Each committee appoints a committee-head to ensure accountability and communication. The committee heads report to the head of the board at regular intervals.

We remain cognizant that every board member is unpaid for this work, is often uncredited, and is always extremely busy with their real job. So we also practice patience, understanding, and flexibility. We trust each member to be open and honest about personal limitations or needs for extensions or lightened work-loads. But our careful distribution helps to ensure that burdens are generally low while still ensuring the high level of productivity that a large and growing initiative like this one requires.

Another organizational decision we made early on was to move our communication from email to Slack. We found that if we relied on email, too many messages would get lost, and the refreshing banter within and between our more serious pieces of communication resulted in overwhelming our email inboxes. Slack allows us to divide our communications by committee, and also makes it easier for people to catch up on everything in batch sessions at the end of an especially busy day (or week) without adding to our already-burdened inboxes.

## 7. MONEY, MONEY, MONEY (GRANT-WRITING)

While WomenAlsoKnowStuff started with a free website, it quickly became clear (as noted above) that we needed more infrastructure, which costs money. In addition, our early success was linked to our distribution of free swag (first stickers, then other branded items) which helped our project gain visibility at conferences. Again, this costs money. We quickly realized that we needed to apply for grants. One of our board members, in fact, is specifically tasked with seeking and applying for support. Not all grant requests are successful, but we have found multiple organizations willing to support us, including the National Science Foundation, the Democracy Fund, the Scholars Strategy Network, and the American Political Science Association.

After the project was firmly established in the discipline and our presence at conferences was welcomed and accepted, we also began to ask the professional organizations that host various professional meetings to fund our presence (and distribution of swag). Not all of these requests were successful, but many organizations recognized the value added of our presence at their meetings and found ways to support us. We found it helpful to pair our requests for financial support with various offers to contribute to those meetings, including hosting workshops and discussions about the WomenAlsoKnowStuff initiative and representation in the discipline.

Our grants generally include various deliverables, such as measures of our impact or creation of materials that will be helpful to others with similar projects. This how-to manual is an example — it is a deliverable that we promised in our NSF grant proposal. Other deliverables involve the collection of data on our impact that we are able to use to write peer-reviewed articles, which as noted above is an important component of work-work balance—we don't just ask our board members to do this service work for the good of the discipline. Producing peer-reviewed publications also means products that are recognized by promotion and tenure committees. Peer-reviewed publications are also deliverables that signal to our funders that our work is demonstrably effective.

#### 8. TO 501(c)3 OR NOT 501(c)3

We are currently exploring avenues to broaden our mission and create a more institutionalized organization. One option we are considering is to incorporate as a nonprofit entity under 501(c)(3) designation. This will afford the growing organization several advantages. These include tax breaks or exceptions, tax deductions, funding eligibility from certain foundations, and protection from personal liability. There are various types of 501(c)(3) organizations. Given the mission of Women Also Know Stuff, it would best be categorized under a public charity. This is the most common type of 501(c)(3). A public charity categorization includes educational organizations which describes this initiative well. Key to gaining and maintaining 501(c)(3) status is to consistently obtain one-third of funding (i.e. donated support) from a broad base of public support. Public support can include individuals, companies, or other public charities. A 501(c)(3) status will enable us to apply for public and private grants. This status will also enable us to offer tax deductions if we were to receive charitable contributions. As a 501(c)(3), WAKS would be a nonprofit organization that exists separate from its founders. WAKS leadership when then be akin to other nonprofit board members who do not personally benefit from the organization. However, the WAKS leadership retains fiduciary responsibility and is accountable for the nonprofit's best interest.

A letter supporting an application for 501(c)(3) status must explicitly emphasize how the organization will provide professional and societal benefits. In other words, Women Also Know Stuff must clearly distinguish itself from a trade organization or a social club. The application should focus on promoting the organization's expertise in public discourse and how its mission is to advance the knowledge of women experts in the political science field for the purpose of creating gender equity. Furthermore, the stated goal should clearly demonstrate that the goal of the organization is to provide broad benefits and does not advantage a particular field or cohort of women. This is done by clearly exhibiting that the public at large has access to the experts the organization is trying to promote (e.g. website is open to the public and not closed for specific groups). The language about the promotion of women must also be clear. The purpose of the organization (and subsequent 501(c)(3) designation) is not to promote women in political science, but rather to support and promote awareness of women experts that has been missed out on that can benefit the public discourse in general. This translates into education from women, rather than education for women.

However, there are costs associated with creating a nonprofit organization. Turning WAKS into a 501(c)(3) would require time, effort and money. There are required fees to apply for incorporation and tax exemption. As a tax exempt organization, the nonprofit must keep detailed records in order and submit annual filings to both the state and Internal Revenue Service by the appropriate deadlines in order to maintain WAKS exempt status. Currently, Menlo College is providing this service for WAKS. Additionally, the WAKS board may have to follow state laws that may require a board of directors who are in turn allowed to appoint or elect officers who will determine policy. This, of course, depends on the state where WAKS will be incorporated. We may wish to incorporate in a state that does not have this provision. Lastly, WAKS finances would be open to public inspection. The public can obtain copies of the organization's state and Federal filings to learn about WAKS expenditures and salaries.

If WAKS decides to move forward with pursuing 501(c)(3) status, we will need to decide which state will "house" the organization. We will then need to create a legally recognized entity (i.e. incorporation). This is the state that will issue an employee ID number and where incorporation documents will be filed. Following the state-filed paperwork, an application to the Internal Revenue Service for the 501(c)(3) status needs to be submitted. A consideration of which state to file for incorporation should include the difficulty of the process. Some states may require more attorney assistance in the process than others.

## 9. TWITTER

This section summarizes some general policies, practices, and expectations for the WomenAlsoKnowStuff Twitter account that we have developed over time through experience and discussion. Hitting the right tone and content is as much art as science, and something we collectively continue to discuss and think through. When there are questions or concerns, they are discussed on Slack (with the appropriate committee) or at WomenAlsoKnowStuff board meetings for general discussion and resolution. We have benefited from the insights of board members with experience in communication theory and practice, and from an outstanding RA, LSU marketing student Erin Hill, during the 2018-19 and 2019-20 academic years. Among other things, Erin drafted much of this handbook section on Twitter. This section represents the goals, strategies, and rules for Twitter that we developed to guide ourselves. As with everything, it is the product of much trial and error, and is often updated and revised.

### **Brand Voice**

One of the most important characteristics of online communication is using "conversational human voice" (Kelleher, 2009, p.176). Conversational tone invites users to converse using relevant language and mimicking two-way communication. The human element promotes an organization's transparency, enhances brand identity, spurs positive word of mouth, gains trust/support and cultivates quality relationships (Park and Lee 2013). It can also connect content between the site and social media. It's important to consider conversational tone in all brand messages – especially social media.

Common ways to capture conversational tone are by tweeting the way you speak, asking questions, being witty, sending empowering messages, responding to mentions, funny GIFs, and so on. We are convinced that much of our success on Twitter can be attributed to our purposely chosen voice: fun, sassy (but not snarky or smug), positive, supportive, engaging, and hopefully funny.

## **Content Tier**

To accommodate all followers and to make things more interesting, we want to have a balanced mixture of a lot of Tweet elements—graphics, articles, promotional content, industry related content, etc. The only time we may tweet about one topic or message for any duration is in the instance of a campaign. We created a content tier model to represent what our daily feed should look like.

## **Content Qualifications**

Consistent with our mission, our Tweet content should fall into one of the following categories. If it's not one of these things, we probably won't tweet about it.

- (1) Research by and expertise of women political scientists (new papers and books, blog posts, articles citing/interviewing them, presence at conferences, etc). This is our central mission and focus.
- (2) Women in the academic profession and sometimes in professions in general (articles/posts about under-rep of women, professional issues facing women, implicit/explicit bias). We try to stay pretty narrow here, focused on women in the academy and general findings. There's a LOT out there about women and sex discrimination and it's not our place to promote all of it (e.g., we don't Tweet about Harvey Weinstein, problems for women in the military, or about the under-representation of women in the various parliaments).
- (3) WomenAlsoKnowStuff itself—swag, contests, initiatives, our website, and so on.
- (4) Creating content that is fun, interactive and/or interesting. Graphics, GIFs and video content are great engagement tools—for example, our summer sabbatical graphic, holiday graphic, infographics, etc. (For more information regarding GIFs see “GIF Guidelines” below)

## **Twitter Do's**

The following points are for our internal use. Please keep these in mind while on Twitter duty or putting Tweets in the queue:

- (1) Respond to or interacting with followers through commenting, liking, retweeting, etc.
- (2) To the extent possible, we post original tweets, rather than RT-ing others. If we do RT, we usually add our own text (“quote RT”) to introduce it. For example, if someone Tweets about a paper and tag us, we will like the Tweet but then create a new Tweet about the paper, rather than just RTing or even quote Tweeting the original Tweet.
- (3) Once you've replied to, RT-ed, or otherwise dealt with a Tweet from someone else, be sure to “like” it. That red heart tells other folks on Twitter duty that a Tweet has been taken care of, so no need to engage, create a Tweet based on, or so on.
- (4) Always tag the expert in the story if possible! Same goes with the outlet, institution, or professional organization when applicable.
- (5) Do your best to respond to as many mentions as possible. If we want followers to engage with us, we must engage with them as well. In particular, if someone \*asks\* us to RT or share something that isn't in our purview or tags us in something we won't necessarily share directly, it is really important to respond in a positive way. For example, we often get tagged for dissertation defenses – it isn't efficient for us to always signal boost these, but it is totally appropriate for us to respond with a celebratory gif and encouragement!

- (6) Regularly use camel case (WomenAlsoKnowStuff instead of womenalsoknowstuff). Anyone relying on a reader (e.g., blind Twitter users) will have an easier time understanding hashtags in camel case rather than lowercase.
- (7) If a troll pops up, do your best to always feed it kindness. It may not satisfy the troll but is certain to represent our brand well to current and potential followers. If the troll persists, DM said troll (from WomenAlsoKnowStuff account) and handle the issue privately. If the troll is harassing or threatening, block. If in doubt, ask in Slack.
- (8) For our most formulaic tweets #WomenAlsoKnowStuff should always come at the end. In some instances – like when we’re being more conversational or it’s a promotion or there’s just too many darn characters – we don’t include the #, but generally that’s our formula. So when you add something to Buffer, please make sure you add it!
- (9) If you see and open a DM you should do your best to handle it. Otherwise the notification goes away. Sometimes if you see one but don’t have time at that moment, don’t open it so you’ll remember there’s something to be handled (or so the next person knows there’s something to handle).
- (10) For APSA tweets make sure you’re using #APSA2019 & #WomenAlsoAPSA, also if room, #HighlightingWomen. Again, we don’t expect our onboarders to do this sort of promotional work, but if you see that opportunity, make sure it’s consistent!

### **Twitter Don’ts**

The following points are for our internal use. Please keep these in mind while on Twitter duty or putting Tweets in the queue:

- (1) We do not promote other disciplines or professions. Our mission is to promote women in political science. We get a lot of inquiries and tags related to other disciplines or other professions (e.g., an example of a manel in engineering or the tech profession—we could RT those all day), but for the most part, we either ignore or only like those tweets, we don’t RT them. Exceptions are things like studies that show citation or job market bias and are more generally applicable to women in political science (e.g., a paper on assuming women aren’t moveable on the job market was in sociology but obviously relevant to us).
- (2) We promote, but we do not criticize specific events or people. Specifically, we do not call out (although we are often asked to do so) manels or conferences/speaker series with few women. There’s a lot of reasons for this policy, but the bottom line is that shaming or attacking others in our discipline is counter-productive (we believe) to our ultimate goal. Rather we applaud when women are present and featured and promote women experts more broadly to help change norms and fight implicit bias. Sometimes we may reply to such tweets with a little snark or a frustrated GIF, but use at your own discretion! And sparingly.
- (3) We do not express political opinions. There are obvious limits and challenges to this policy in this day and age. If there are questions or concerns (about this or anything else), we discuss it.
- (4) Posts are **not** endorsements of the expert opinion expressed or research design or conclusion.
- (5) No one has a “right” to a post on the WomenAlsoKnowStuff Twitter account. The WomenAlsoKnowStuff board (and specifically the Social Media, Marketing & Promotion sub-committee) controls the content of the WomenAlsoKnowStuff Twitter account and has total discretion over what is posted. We reserve the right to not share information for any reason.

- (6) We do not share job opportunities of any kind. After being inundated with such requests it became clear that people were tagging us as a way of checking a diversity box. Recruitment is important and tagging us is not a replacement for actual thoughtful efforts at diversifying, so we will not engage in such behaviors. You may choose to like the post, but commenting and/or sharing is not necessary.
- (7) Rarely we will promote award nominations (#WomenAlsoWinAwards), and calls for specialized conferences. There are so many of these, and they can be noisy for our followers, so exceptions should only be made under extraordinary circumstances, such as major awards and accomplishments by women political scientists (elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, for example). We are often tagged in tenure and promotions, and graduations, etc – we can't and should not RT all of these. Instead it is more important to respond and engage and encourage!
- (8) We rarely use post things without links to something if at all possible — exceptions are promotional or direct engagement – like, what's giving you life this week fam? Or, share your favorite syllabi resources? Etc. We do not use “WomenAlsoKnowStuff” in Tweets; that acronym is internal to the board.
- (9) We try not to be redundant in a tweet (generally fewer characters is better). That means not saying the title of the journal and also tagging it – instead just tagging it; not saying author name & tagging them – instead just tagging them.
- (10) For the most part we don't use a lot of extra # besides our own. This is because we noticed that our engagement actually slips the more # we use; there are definitely exceptions to this rule – like #followfriday or #tbt or other “big” # that may be appropriate, use your judgement!

### **GIF Guidelines**

We LOVE GIFs! They are usually our most popular tweets. However, we want women of all kinds to see themselves reflected in our feed, so that means we need to be aware of who's represented and ensure there is balance. At the same time, we need to be particularly mindful of digital blackface; for an explanation, see: <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/digital-blackface-reaction-gifs> and <https://twitter.com/waxpancake/status/978335300144386048?lang=en>

Getting the right representation and tone in GIFs sometimes stresses people out. As long as you are thoughtful about the context (ask yourself, is this image playing on stereotypes or tropes that are harmful?) then you're probably ok.

If you need more guidance, here are some ways to avoid digital blackface:

- Don't use a GIF
- Use animals or cartoons
- Use an image with a group of women
- Avoid GIFs that play on stereotypes
- Avoid GIFs from reality television (Real Housewives, for example) and if you're not sure or comfortable (generally a good idea to NOT use GIFs if you're not familiar with the character or context)
- Avoid GIFs from pop culture in general

### **Finding/ Uploading GIFs**

- (1) The easiest way is to go to Twitter.com, open a new tweet, click the GIF button, search for one you like, and then right click, click “save image as,” save to your desktop and then add to Buffer.
- (2) If there are GIFs you use often, save them to a folder for easy reference.
- (3) The last alternative is you can go to [www.gify.com](http://www.gify.com) and search, but sometimes this website can be a bit annoying. Options are good though!

### **Twitter Logistics**

- (1) We use a shared Google calendar for Twitter team folks to sign up for weeks to cover. This way everyone knows who is “on” at any one time.
- (2) Erin has added major events (promotional campaigns, holidays, conferences, etc.) to this calendar – also known as trendspotting. If you notice a major political event coming up or a conversational piece, insert it into the calendar. Whichever team is in charge of that week will decide whether to Tweet about it.
- (2) We use Buffer to schedule posts throughout the day. Any post that is not particularly timely should be added to the Buffer queue or scheduled when there is a lull in scheduled tweets.
- (3) If the content of the post is more immediate, you can either Tweet it immediately, set it to Post Next in Buffer, or schedule it to post at a particular time and day through Buffer. We try to avoid a glut of posts at any one time; Buffer and other Twitter scheduling can help avoid that.
- (4) Do your best to always add an image if applicable. It makes tweets more visually appealing. Most tweets containing a URL will automatically select images to use. However, some sources do not (e.g., The Washington Post). Pictures of women scholars are especially good as they challenge our stereotypes of who experts are.
- (5) We tend to stick to 10 tweets maximum each day to avoid overload. Replies do not count toward the 10.

When not on Twitter duty for the week, board members are expected to:

- (1) Pass along Twitter content as you come across it. If it is not your designated week you may add it to the Buffer without scheduling it or you can mention/DM the WomenAlsoKnowStuff account using your personal account.

When on Twitter duty for the week, a board member is responsible for:

- (1) Checking notifications (@womenalsoknow and #WomenAlsoKnowStuff) for any Tweets that need to be responded to or posts that need to be shared
- (2) Checking DMs for same
- (3) Scheduling content (media links are typically the RA’s responsibility)
- (4) Liking, responding, and interacting with the audience
- (5) Keeping an eye out for promotional opportunities. Discuss with the Social Media, Marketing, and Promotion committee before launching any campaign.
- (6) Scheduling content on weekends is optional.
- (7) Weekly duties start on Monday

## **Promotions and Marketing**

The Social Media and Promotion committee is in charge of all promotions and marketing. If there is anything outside of our general formula of sharing articles women wrote, sharing news articles featuring women, or sharing work of general interest to women in the academy—e.g. more promotional type material—this should be at least run by, and preferably through, the Social Media, Marketing, and Promotion committee. We don't want to dissuade creativity, but sometimes we have # or timelines we are following that you may not be privy to! If in doubt, ask in Slack. But please, if you see an opportunity or have an idea we want to hear it!

## **Google Alerts**

We find it useful to create and monitor Google Alerts. This alert system emails you article links if they include specific search words. This currently falls under the purview of the SMaP RA's duties, but can be done in the event it is needed.

How it works

- (1) Input one of the below search phrases into the Google search bar (include quotation marks)
- (2) Click over to the News tab underneath the search bar
- (3) Scroll down to the bottom of the page and select "Create Alert"

Relevant search phrases:

- a. "political science professor"
- b. "political scientist"
- c. "professor of political science"
- d. "professor of government"
- e. "government professor"
- f. "public policy professor"
- g. "professor of public policy"

The Google Alerts are not perfect, so we recommend manually searching them as well. You will not be notified of every article using the search word. In this case, I suggest typing in the search word, tabbing over to News and then clicking "Tools" to narrow down your search. You can change the time to "past hour," "past 24 hours," "past week," etc. AND you can sort by date which will show the articles in chronological order.

## **Putting articles into Buffer**

- (1) Before inputting an article into the Buffer, make sure it is a national news source, fits our mission, and includes a woman political scientist by quote, commending or referencing her research, or as the author.

*NOTE:* if there's a tweet from a local venue that we think is valuable either because 1) it's a slow day, 2) it's a person we don't tweet often or ever and/or 3) it's an issue that is of appeal to some portion of our audience then yes, tweet it!

- (2) Next, search Twitter for the women cited in the article. If she does not have a Twitter account tag her institution's name.

- (3) Put item in Buffer, including #WomenAlsoKnowStuff hashtag and graphic (if possible) and create an appropriate tweet around it. Try to make it a teaser of the article and use conversational tone.

NOTE: If you upload a *Washington Post* article, a graphic may not automatically generate. Take a screenshot of the photo and upload it to the tweet.

Alternative: You might also consider installing the Buffer extension for Chrome or whatever you use. This means that if you're reading an article that cites a woman, just click on the Buffer icon, and it immediately creates a draft post for you with the title and URL, and a choice of pictures. SO EASY. Also, if you highlight text on the screen, it will include that as well. You can either put in the queue (and then you or someone else can schedule it later) or schedule it right then.

### **Other relevant places to search for Twitter content**

Sometimes it's hard to find relevant content on Google. Try these other options if the queue is getting short!

- New Books Political Science Podcast page  
Look for any recent interviews with women about new books they've published
- Monkey Cage Blog Twitter Page  
Look for any recent Monkey Cage blogs published by women political scientists or featuring them.

## 10. WEBSITE

In this section, we discuss the goals and likely issues of establishing a group website. We include a discussion of the evolution of the WomenAlsoKnowStuff website as well as a reflection on lessons we have learned over the course of our website's evolution. We also include a tentative list of website deliverables for groups to use while creating or modifying their own sites or databases.

### *Getting Started*

Before creating a website, it's important for the group to ask itself, "what is the primary goal of this site?" This is not to say that your website cannot or will not have multiple goals. However, by forcing yourself to state the single most important goal that the site will accomplish, this will greatly help you design the look and feel of the website as well as getting a head start defining your website deliverables.

For example, if the site's primary goal is to connect academics and journalists with women + experts in the discipline, as is the case with the WomenAlsoKnowStuff website, then having a clean, search oriented site is optimal. The landing page is the search function, with little else sharing the page to distract users from the basic/advanced search bars. In contrast, if the primary goal is to promote events or engagement on social media, a layered website with a colorful, detailed, scrollable landing page with clickable images is probably ideal.

### *A Tale of ~~Two~~ Four Websites*

The first website was a (free) WordPress site organized by political science subfields and topics. Each subfield or topic page would have a list of scholars and their respective institutions, organized alphabetically by scholars' last names. For example, a page on "African Politics" listed the names of women who were researching/writing on African Politics. Any political scientist could suggest names of scholars to be added to each list and the original founding members of WomenAlsoKnowStuff largely drew on their professional networks to identify women to be included but also used social media to invite women to join, encouraging self nominations. This original approach did not first seek permission of scholars who were listed (many were nominated by their peers to be listed) and included minimal information about scholars' expertise, limited in particular by the handful of topics and subfields used to organize the lists. This site was plagued by —perhaps what should have been obvious— flaws: women listed against their wishes, users changing formatting and inadvertently deleting entries, no vetting process to ensure that appropriate individuals appeared. This site lasted no more than a week before we began to seek better options.

The second website was hosted on WordPress and included a standard database plug-in. The major innovations in moving to a WordPress site was that individuals were solely responsible for updating their own profile information and could include much more professional information (such as a short biography, individual publications, etc.). Moreover, users could no longer sign up other individuals to the site, which helped to ensure that most profiles were not left incomplete (e.g. basic scholar information added but no publication or media information). Eventually, however, the database plug-in ceased being functional. Individuals wishing to update their profiles were required to email a Board member and manually request the information be changed on the administrator's end, which was enormously labor intensive. This database plug-in crash ultimately set the stage for the third incarnation of the website, where the major improvement was to allow users to create and login to their own accounts using a password of their choice (rather than through an emailed link generated by the database plug-in).

The third website was programmed by a new Board member in Summer 2017. The new site added several important features. First, as noted above, it eliminated a major security vulnerability: the emailed link generated by the plug-in that allowed users to edit their accounts. It replaced this function with individual accounts locked by user supplied passwords. Second, the site improved search functionality. Rather than have the standard searchable spreadsheet, which is how most database plug-ins operate, users could select from all "major" research area keywords (i.e. the official "sections" from the American Political Science Association). It also added the capacity to conduct an advanced live search of sorts, whereby users could begin typing in more specific keywords in the search bar and matching keywords would auto-populate in the space below with a list of user counts for each. For example, typing the word "urban" would return users studying "urban politics," "urban poverty," and "urbanization" (without having to sort or scroll through irrelevant lines in a spreadsheet). However improved this site was, it still didn't fully represent the group's vision. For one, it was relatively cluttered, inconsistently styled/formatted, and the landing page had, as the Executive Committee eventually concluded, way too much text. Moreover, we received some constructive criticism from users (both scholars and journalists) regarding the search function.

The current, and fourth, incarnation of the website addressed these user criticisms and called for a complete aesthetic overhaul; the design and programming of the site was contracted out to a professional web developer. The decision was made to make the landing page clean, clear and search oriented. The search function itself was greatly simplified, at least on the users' end; on the back-end, the search requires much more intensive code (and a more robust server) than the previous version.

There were four recurring criticisms that users noted with the third version of the website. First, the search was keyword focused. Thus, users could not search across the entire text of user profiles to locate relevant scholars. Second, users lamented the inability to search for scholars using multiple keywords at once. Third, listed scholars expressed a desire to use their own keywords to describe their research interests (rather than our pre-screened research interests such as the "official" section names from the American Political Science Association).<sup>2</sup> And Fourth, users noted how useful it would be to create complex and tailored searches (namely, the ability to add AND/OR conditions to searches). All of these concerns were addressed in the creation of the fourth, and current, site.

### *Lessons Learned*

Over the course of four websites, we've learned a few things. We recognize that these lessons will not necessarily apply to all groups. But we hope that these lessons might save some of you some time as you work toward establishing or revamping your website.

- 1) Clarify your website goal(s) ahead of time. And be specific.

Write down the primary goal(s) that you want your website to accomplish. Be as specific as possible. For example, instead of saying that you want your website to have "a database of women+ scholars," say that you want "a searchable database of women+ scholars where journalists and academics alike can search by research interest, location, country of interest, publication title, outlet, or biographical information." The more specific the goal, the easier it will be to come up with your specific website deliverables.

- 2) Don't just think about where you are; think about where you want to go.

Ideally, you will not need to go through several incarnations of the same website, each one iteratively more complex and providing a more intuitive user experience. Think now about where you want your group and website to be five to ten years from now. How large do you see your database growing? How many site visitors do you anticipate receiving in the future? Thinking several years into the future, how might your website needs be different than they are today? For instance, if you anticipate your database growing to several thousand users (or more), you'll want to dedicate some time today toward organizing an intuitive (for visitors) and functional search capacity that returns valid results. Obviously, things will change and your vision in the future will likely be at least somewhat different than the one you have now. That's ok. Just know that the work

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<sup>2</sup> It should be noted that moving away from this option requires active monitoring by site administrators to ensure that all search terms added by users to the database make sense.

you do today in anticipating your future needs and laying down the appropriate infrastructure will make your workload tomorrow much smaller.

3) Don't limit your technical vision to what you already know how to do.

If you can't find an existing template, create your own. Create a dream website wish list. How does it look? What can it do? Assume technical limitations away. Once you have a concrete wish list and a specific list of goals, look for the right people who share your vision and can make it happen.

4) Think about your user's experience. Make it easy.

Above all else, your website should be easy to navigate, and your search function should be intuitive to use. Imagine someone visiting your site that has never heard of your group before and isn't familiar with your goals or vision. Are your goals and vision clear to users on the landing page (without any interaction needed)? For instance, on <https://www.womenalsoknowstuff.com/>, the search bar contains greyed out text that denotes the purpose of the search function ("Find Experts in Political Science"). The search function itself has been validated by members of the Executive Committee to ensure that it produces relevant and valid results (prior to the website's launch; this is an in-depth conversation to be had with your programmer if you are contracting out).

### *Deliverables for a Search Oriented Site*

There are five broad deliverable areas for the WomenAlsoKnowStuff website: 1) Landing Page Aesthetic/Organization, 2) User Sign-Ups/Profiles, 3) Search Functionality, 4) Custom GUI, and 5) Terms of Use/Privacy Policy. Groups should feel free to modify these deliverables to meet their own specific website needs. The goal with website deliverables, particularly if you are contracting out the site's creation, is to provide the programmer with all of the necessary information to design the website. This is especially important if the programmer is not a member of the group and thus will not innately understand your specific goals, values, and needs for the site. Clear and detailed communication of your site needs is key.

1) Landing Page Aesthetic/Organization

- Landing page should be search focused, with minimal content.
- Landing page to contain: logo, search bar, collapsible sidebar, login/registration buttons
- Collapsible sidebar to contain: links to all site pages, link to social media account.

2) User Sign-Ups/Profiles

- Registration Page: collect name, email address, user password, CAPTCHA, terms and conditions
  - Email address must be validated by the user before continuing on in Registration process.
  - Following user email validation, registration process can be completed.

- Users enter country of residence, address (optional), phone (optional), user photo (optional), job market status, availability as a media contact, university of employment, professional status, PhD/PhD Candidate, Year of PhD, personal website/social media (optional), research interests/keywords, countries of interest, biography (optional), detailed research narrative (optional).
- Site administrators review user applications (to make sure all potential users fit the site requirements) and can accept, reject, or delete users.
- Users can add individual publication information and media experience (links to past media interviews). Both optional.
- Users can login to their account at any point to change/update information, toggle job market status or media availability.

### 3) Search Functionality

- Basic Search Function: search across entire user profiles, ability to enter multiple keywords in the same search, ability to use quotations for a specific match as well as an AND/OR function.
  - E.g. “Direct democracy” will return users with “direct democracy” (as an exact matching phrase) in their profiles; *direct democracy* will first return users with “direct democracy” (as an exact matching phrase) in their profiles followed by those users with either *direct* or *democracy* appearing in their profiles. “Direct democracy” is functionally the same search as direct AND democracy.
- Advanced Search Function: ability to search within specific profile categories (e.g. publications, research interests, country/state of residence, on the job market, available as a media contact, etc. Ability to string together multiple specific requests via AND/OR function.
  - E.g. Find someone who studies “public policy” as a research interest that is also “on the job market.”

### 4) Custom GUI

- When requesting a custom GUI, it is critical that you communicate to the programmer all conceivable uses for the interface; that is, what do you need the interface to be able to do/change on the site? Our website uses two custom GUIs: one for users and one for site administrators (Executive Committee Members that are responsible for managing day to day site functions).
- User GUI: ability of users to login to their account and update all information using a point and click interface.
- Admin GUI: ability to designate site administrators from user list. Administrators have the ability to review user applications, reject users, delete users, designate additional administrators, set Executive Committee members, remove administrator/Executive Committee status, track searches, download user logs, and add/change website pages using a point and click interface.

## 5) Terms of Use/Privacy Policy

- **Please note: we are not attorneys, and this information is not legal advice.** Rather, it is a simple explanation of our own policies and of the research that we did while compiling these policies.
- Terms of Use: specify the content contained on the site, note that the group is not responsible for user provider content, specify terms for creating an account, specify ownership of intellectual property, grounds for account termination, specify the limitations of liability, specify the group's right to change the terms with notice, and provide group contact information.
- Privacy policies are required to contain five elements: 1) Notice (what personal information is collected on the site), 2) Choice (what options the user has about how/whether personal data is collected and used, 3) Access (how a user can see what data has been collected and change/correct it if necessarily, 4) Security (state how any data that is collected is stored/protected, and 5) Redress (what users can do if privacy policy is not met). Groups should also develop a cookie policy that states what kinds of cookies are collected (first party versus third party, e.g. Google Analytics, cookies) and how users can disable these cookies.
- GDPR Compliance: websites appear to be exempt from GDPR if they only contain user information that has been “manifestly made public” by the users themselves. In other words, our website does not collect any personal information that users do not, themselves, enter into the website. However, if your website uses either an embedded Twitter feed or Google Analytics, you are not necessarily in GDPR compliance, even if your website contains only information manifestly made public by users themselves. Google Analytics can be edited so that IP addresses/locations are not collected.<sup>3</sup>

### *To Contract Out or Design In-House?*

The decision to contract a professional web developer or design your own site in-house can be a difficult one. The costs of contracting out are largely dependent on your group's needs. For instance, if you need a bespoke GUI for website administrators to validate/activate new users, a point and click interface to easily add or change pages on the site, or the ability to manually tweak the site search algorithm, this will require more funds.

In contrast, a simpler site without a custom made GUI, where only “back end” changes can be made by a webmaster (typically the programmer), will cost considerably less (but will incur the cost of hiring a webmaster).<sup>4</sup> If no one in the group is proficient in coding or web development, there are several

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<sup>3</sup> Twitter analytics are not so readily edited. Users must be made aware of these third parties that do collect information on site users. Twitter feeds can be disabled so that they do not automatically collect information on site users/visitors unless users/visitors explicitly click to access the Twitter feed on the landing page.

<sup>4</sup> A programmer is the individual that creates the code for the website and its functionality. In contrast, a webmaster is the individual that manages/updates the site on a day to day basis and addresses any technical problems that may arise. When a website has no no behind the scenes GUI to interact with, it is

affordable in-house options to designing a site. Most groups on our “Related Initiatives” page use either WordPress, Weebly, or Google Sites to operate their websites. These are affordable and intuitive options for those not wishing to program or generate their own code. As noted above, WomenAlsoKnowStuff began as a crowd sourced WordPress site.

There are several (also affordable) database plug-ins for WordPress and Weebly. These plug-ins typically cost around \$10/month (give or take). Their functionality is essentially that of an online excel file where users can search for strings (i.e. matching text). The key advantages of the database plug-in include affordability, relative ease of operation, and there is no need to involve or pay outsider programmers.

However, there are sizable disadvantages to these plug-ins as well. First and foremost, most database plug-ins have very limited search functionality; as noted above, their search functions equate to a Control-F search of an online spreadsheet. They cannot search specific criteria or distinguish between the context of matching strings (e.g. if I want to locate someone that studies “Kenya,” the search will return those people as well as anyone named “Kenya,” which makes it more labor intensive to successfully use the search function.) There are also significant security concerns with the typical method whereby users update their profiles, particularly with the advent of the new GDPR laws which are beginning to be enforced.<sup>5</sup> Nonetheless, keeping these drawbacks in mind, a database plug-in for WordPress (or the like) can be an intuitive and affordable option for groups getting their first site off the ground.

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often necessary to hire the programmer that designed the site to manually make updates to individual pages etc. (unless there is someone in-house that is proficient in the programming language used to design the site).

<sup>5</sup> Namely, most plug-ins email users an unsecure link that allows them to edit their profiles.