

Improving

FACULTY RECOGNITION PROCESSES

Modified from Stewart, A. & Valian, V. (2018). *An inclusive academy: Achieving diversity and excellence* (chapter 10). Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. See chapter for more detail.

- 1 Create a climate of informal recognition of faculty accomplishment. Name particular contributions, thank individual faculty in writing or orally for their contributions, and hold other leaders accountable for identifying faculty contributions of many different kinds.
- 2 Create formal recognition for many kinds of contributions by faculty. Seek funding for those formal awards. The procedures for nominations should allow many faculty to make nominations (including self-nomination) and should engage many diverse faculty in the selection process.
- 3 Nominate faculty—including White women and underrepresented minorities—for disciplinary and meta-disciplinary awards. The more awards faculty have, the better known their department and institution will be, the more likely it is that faculty will be successful in getting grants, and the more likely it is that their letters of recommendation for students will count.
- 4 If nominators are not knowledgeable about the potential nominees' work, confer with them about the names of external people who could be approached about nominating the person. They might be willing to nominate or co-nominate a faculty member. For ideas about what to include, consulting the letters of recommendation that were written for people when they were hired or the referee letters that were written when they were promoted. The chair of a department, or the dean or provost of a school, can also be a nominator, using as a draft a letter that someone else at the institution may have written. The institution's imprimatur will be helpful.
- 5 Develop committees that are charged with identifying potential awardees and matching them with potential awards. A committee structure helps solve the problem of lack of knowledge of a person's work, makes it more likely that helpful ideas will emerge, and increases everyone's knowledge about awards.
- 6 Solve the problem that a potential nominator may not know how to write a good letter even if they are knowledgeable about the potential nominee's work. Help nominators write letters and help provide constructive critiques from others, both inside and outside the institution. A well-crafted letter carries weight.
- 7 Resubmit the nomination letter, updated as appropriate, if the nominee has not been selected. Many nominees only win on their third round.
- 8 As with all institutional metrics, track the distribution of informal and formal awards as well as nominations by gender, race-ethnicity, and field. Regular review of those data can identify under-recognized individuals and fields and can lead to correction in the process.