



SSSA Leadership Handbook



The Soil Science Society of America (SSSA) is a progressive international scientific society that fosters the transfer of knowledge and practices to sustain global soils. Based in Madison, WI, and founded in 1936, SSSA is the professional home for 5,000+ members and 700+ certified professionals dedicated to advancing the field of soil science. The Society provides information about soils in relation to crop production, environmental quality, ecosystem sustainability, bioremediation, waste management, recycling, and wise land use.

SSSA supports its members and certified professionals by providing quality research-based publications, educational programs, certifications, and science policy initiatives via a Washington, DC office.

Join: www.soils.org/my-account/divisions/sssa

Learn more: www.soils.org/membership/divisions

Discussion Boards: www.soils.org/discussion-boards

SSSA Divisions

Agricultural Soil and Food Systems Group

Nutrient Management and Soil and Plant Analysis Division

Manufacturing technology, additives, coating techniques, evaluation, and soil test analysis.

Soil and Water Management and Conservation Division

Irrigation, drainage, tillage, erosion, evaporation, transpiration, cropping systems, and cultivation methods.

Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition Division

Plant nutrients and plant nutrition, interaction of plant growth factors, and soil and plant tissue tests.

Education and Practicing Professionals Group

Consulting Soil Scientists Division

Provide a professional perspective to the soil science profession through education, networking, and training needs of consultants and by putting research to practical use.

Soil Education and Outreach Division

Soil science education and outreach to K-12 and the general public.

Fundamental Soil Science Group

Pedology Division

Soil formation and geology, physical and chemical properties, soil survey and mapping, interpretation of soil behavior, and wetland preservation.

Soil Biology and Biochemistry Division

Soil microorganisms, organic matter, nitrogen transformations, microbial decomposition, rhizosphere dynamics, mycorrhizae, enzymes, and fate of organic material.

Soil Chemistry Division

Analysis, acidity, liming, ion exchange, physical chemistry of soils, and behavior of soil additives.

Soil Mineralogy Division

Frequency, distribution, formation, translocation, and properties of soil minerals.

Soil Physics and Hydrology Division

Water movement, structure and aggregation, and modeling of water movement and contaminant movement.

Soil and Ecosystem Processes Group

Forest, Range, and Wildland Soils Division

Soil organic matter dynamics; biogeochemistry of deficient nutrients; long-term soil sustainability management practices; belowground processes and rhizosphere dynamics; water relations/hydrology; soil biodiversity.

Soils and Environmental Quality Division

Influence upon and interaction of soils with the environment; efforts of soil scientists to maintain and improve the quality of the environment.

Urban and Anthropogenic Soils Division

Soils altered by human activities in the suburban or urban environment.

Wetland Soils Division

Wetland soil processes, classification, nutrient relationships, and water quality.

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Introduction and Overview

- **Vision:** To assure a healthy and sustainable world through soils.
- **Mission:** To advance knowledge and appreciation of soils as a foundation of life.
- **Values:** Adherence to scientific, professional, and ethical standards; Pursuit, dissemination, and application of knowledge; Professional development and education; Collaborative and engaged membership; Diversity, equity, and inclusion of people and perspectives; Service to society through sustainability

Leadership

Divisions are the building blocks of the Society. Focused on the technical, discipline, educational, and networking aspects of the Society, they allow opportunities to collaborate and educate. Division Chairs provide the immediate interaction of the membership of the Society and should drive it toward the future.

The Board of Directors provides the vision and strategic direction for the Society. This has and is driven by leaders who have recognized the importance of the Society's function in bringing together the knowledge and inspiration to enhance discovery and define agronomic science and application.

The Committees and Task Forces that provide recommendations and guidance to the Board by focusing membership perspectives and experience are important in defining structure and priority to emerging issues.

The Headquarters staff provide a critical function in that they "Make it All Work." They keep track of decisions, conduct analysis and assessment, and provide the member services that are critical to the organization and function of the Society.

Organizational Overview

SSSA Leadership and Organization

SSSA is governed by a 18-member Board of Directors (15 voting members and three ex-officio members) who are guided by a Strategic Plan and adhere to the organizational bylaws.

Headquarters Staff

The Society membership is fortunate to have a skilled, efficient, and dedicated staff at Madison headquarters to turn new ways of doing and improving leader and member services into reality. The Headquarters staff includes employees working in the departments of Certification, Education, Finance, Governance, IT/Operations, Membership, Meetings, Public and Science Communications, Publications, and Science Policy. Most of the employees work at the Madison, WI office. There is also a Science Policy Office located in Washington, DC. View the Contact Us page on the SSSA website for a list of staff, titles, and contact information: www.soils.org/contact

ACSESS

The Alliance of Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science Societies (ACSESS) is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization providing management and administrative support services to its founding members. SSSA together with the Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and American Society of Agronomy (ASA), are the charter member organizations of the Alliance of Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science Societies (ACSESS), the support organization for the three Societies. ACSESS, which formed on January 1, 2009, provides oversight of operations and ensures coordination among ACSESS societies. The ACSESS Board of Directors is comprised of the ASA, SSSA, and SSSA President, Past President and President-Elect; the ASA, SSSA, and SSSA Chief Executive Officer as ex-officio, nonvoting; and other ex-officio, nonvoting members, as needed. The headquarters office for these international Societies is based in Madison, Wisconsin. For more information, visit www.myacsess.org/

Chapter 1

SSSA Divisions



Agricultural Soil and Food Systems Group

Nutrient Management and Soil and Plant Analysis Division

Manufacturing technology, additives, coating techniques, evaluation, and soil test analysis.

Soil and Water Management and Conservation Division

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Provide a professional perspective to the soil science profession through education, networking, and training needs of consultants and by putting research to practical use.

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Soil science education and outreach to K-12 and the general public.

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SSSA Divisions

Each of SSSA's 14 Divisions of Interest organized into Groups, offer a unique perspective into the world of Soil Science -- from chemistry to physics, soil fertility and plant nutrition, to forest soils, and consulting, to K-16 activities and more -- there is a place for everyone.

SSSA's specialized Divisions of Interest provides members with the opportunity to develop focused peer networks and information resources. Via the divisions, members present papers at the Annual Meetings and participate in Division Business Meetings. The Divisions may also host discussion boards, webpages, and newsletters. Division members, guide the division direction by participating in elections and serving through leadership opportunities.

Purpose of SSSA Divisions

The Division structure enables SSSA to have the necessary structure for stable Society governance. This structure is intended to give members opportunity to find and interact with others with similar interests.

The primary purpose of Divisions is to better assemble members of common interest, facilitate planning, communication, and coordination of programs and services. Most programs and service activities are initiated within Divisions providing a coordinating and management role. The Divisions also provides a governance voice for the Society, with each of the 14 Divisions represented on the SSSA Board through Groups.

Division Membership and Recruiting

As a benefit of membership, members may join any/all SSSA Divisions. Division membership is easily modified online through a member's account at www.soils.org/my-account/divisions/sssa

Division Chairs are encouraged to review their list of members on their Division Discussion Board and invite others to join their Division, especially SSSA undergraduate and graduate student members and early career members. They should also encourage them to participate in leadership.

Services to SSSA Divisions

SSSA is committed to creating, developing, and growing the opportunities for Divisions. As such, services will be provided to the Division Leadership through the Chair and Chair-Elect officers. These will generally be managed through SSSA staff. They include:

- Support to meet at the Annual Meeting (meeting space for Business Meetings, as requested)
- Program Enhancement Funds
- Promotion of Division activities, as requested
- Other services as approved by the SSSA Board

Division Chairs

Division Chairs must be members of SSSA and members of the SSSA Division that they wish to represent. Division Chairs will serve three-year terms, with the first year as Division Chair Elect and the second year as Division Chair and the third as Past Chair.

Roles of Division Chairs

The Chair of each Division shall be responsible for the operations of the Division. Jointly, the Division Chair Elect, Chair, and Past Chair will do the following:

1. Provide leadership for the Division they serve. This includes directing the Annual Division Meeting. The Division Presiding Chair schedules the time, notifies members, and conducts the meeting.
2. Division Chairs will identify oral and poster sessions, develop symposia, plan field trips, workshops, or develop other activities. Details of all activities will be forwarded to the SSSA Program Planning Officer.
3. Provide nominees for Division Chair Elect, Board of Director Representative, and SSSA President-Elect.
4. Develop and implement plans that maintain or enhance the viability of the Division and support the needs of Division members.
5. Implement actions approved by Division members.
6. Communicate and report information of the Division and submit their annual report to the SSSA Board of Directors.

Elections of Division Leadership

Division Chairs are elected as part of the general election by the SSSA membership. Elections are held each year for a new Chair-Elect. For more information, view the Appendix.

Annual Division Business Meeting

The chair shall arrange and conduct the annual business meeting of the division and shall serve as division program chair. Details about the Annual Division Business meeting are found in Chapter 2: Annual Meeting.

Communication Options for Divisions

E-Meetings

Communities can arrange to use the Society's electronic meeting system to facilitate discussions and collaboration. To schedule this, contact membership@sciencesocieties.org

Discussion Boards



All Division Discussion Boards will have links for Elected Leaders/Guidelines, Member List, and to Donate.

Visit the tutorial page for details: www.soils.org/discussion-boards

- Network, connect and stay informed!
- Push notifications are available for time-sensitive posts.
- Communicate with your Division Members
- Members receive a daily digest of new community posts across all groups they belong to
- Start and Follow discussions
- Membership login same for all discussion boards.
- Discussions will have threads and archives – for easy viewing and keeping up-to-date!
- Polls can be created to gather feedback

Join the discussion: www.soils.org/discussion-boards

Chapter 2

SSSA Annual Meeting



Divisions: Annual Meetings and Beyond

Division activities focus on members' program and service needs. Activities may include SSSA Annual Meeting activities, such as symposia, oral sessions, meetings, workshops, tours, and social functions. Divisions may conduct or sponsor activities that go beyond the SSSA Annual Meetings, such as virtual meetings, workshops, smaller conferences, publications, awards, listservs, leadership development, white papers, books, grants, and many others, depending on feedback obtained from members.

Annual Meeting Programming

Divisions are an important part of the Annual Meeting programming. A major portion of meeting content and networking is provided through Divisions. They play a primary role in developing activities for the Annual Meetings to include organizing oral and poster sessions, symposia, student activities and contests, workshops, tours and more. Division Chairs:

1. Solicit program ideas from Division members.
2. Communicate those ideas, as well as other activities, to the SSSA Program Planning Chair, and keep them informed as to the scheduling of sessions, symposia, events.
3. Add events (such as oral or poster sessions, events, and your annual Division Business Meeting) to the Annual Meetings program through our web-based scheduling software.
4. Create promotional posters about your Division to display at the SSSA Annual Meeting in the Exhibit Hall. View the Division poster example in this Handbook.

Annual Meeting Program Planning Manual

For programming purposes, the Meetings Department publishes a SSSA Program Planning Manual, designed to guide Chairs through the process of assembling the Division programs at the Annual Meetings. It is a valuable tool which incorporates the when, how, and who of activities to program the Annual Meeting. It provides action and activity deadlines, information on electronic scheduling, as well as select policies and procedures for non-symposium or oral session functions. The Meetings Department also generates a SSSA Meeting Planning Process schedule for the Annual Meeting year.

Volunteer Oral and Poster Sessions. Division Chairs are responsible for organizing or supporting others within the Division in efforts to organize volunteer oral and poster sessions. Session topics can be identified during the annual Division Business Meeting, solicited through the Division's Discussion Board, and/or by Division members. Division Chairs have access to the online programming system, in order to organize oral and poster sessions for their Division. As with symposia, it is important that Division Chairs communicate with the program Planning Officer on sessions.

Activities and Competitions

Divisions are encouraged to work with their members to incorporate student activities and competitions into their programs to mentor and attract B.S. and M.S. students in the Society. This could include poster/oral paper competitions and awards. To initiate a competition, contact Nate Ehresman, nehresman@sciencesocieties.org, 608-268-4942.

Certificates

SSSA Divisions sometimes require certificates to present to important speakers or award recipients during the Annual Meeting. The Societies have made a certificate-generating tool available for just such occasions. As a Division Chair, you are authorized to access this tool by signing in at www.soils.org/acsAdmin/students/generate-certificates with your Society login information. Please be aware it is your responsibility as Chair to generate, print, and transport your desired certificates to the Annual Meeting for your Division.

Division Business Meeting

Division Business Meetings will be held at the SSSA Annual Meeting. The Division Business Meeting is chaired and conducted by the Division Chair with minutes kept by the Chair Elect. A report of the Division Business Meeting, is submitted to SSSA headquarters as part of the Annual Report. Division Chairs can send notice of Division Business Meeting time and place to members through the Division Discussion Board. The Division Business Meetings may follow this sample format:

- Message from one of the Presidents
- Board Representative Report: Division Board Reps will provide an update on Society activities (they will receive Talking Points in advance of the Annual Meeting). This may include: Annual Meeting report, budget and finance summary, membership update
- Review Division activity
- Open discussion for Division symposia ideas
- Explanation of Program Enhancement Fund Policy
- Election nominations: Division Chairs discuss and identify candidates for Vice Chair and Division Board Representative when the positions become vacant. Division Chairs to also discuss/identify candidates for SSSA President-Elect. Division Chairs will provide candidate names of Division Officers and SSSA President-Elect to their Division Board Rep during the Annual Meeting.

Best Practices for SSSA Divisions

Promoting diversity and inclusion within our SSSA Divisions is a top priority. We asked current leaders what ways they are doing this and developed this list of “Best Practices.” We hope you can begin to initiate these ideas into your Division in the coming year!

Year Round-Engagement and Inclusion

- Recruit future leadership through personal interactions and encourage diversity in leadership positions in your SSSA Division.
- Recruit new members to join SSSA with personal invites to students.
- Involve Chair-Elects into the scheduling/planning for the Annual Meeting.
- Communicate with your members via Discussion Boards! Keep messages short, use bullets to highlight the important items.
- When soliciting session ideas consider hot topics or issues in the news to gain traction and interest.
- Hold Zoom meetings for topical discussion and social hours.
- Promote Society Award nominations from your SSSA Division members.
- Schedule an annual Online Division Business Meeting, which allows the opportunity for members to identify future leadership and develop activities for the coming year.

Involve students:

- Highlight student competition opportunities to let students know that their contributions are appreciated.
- Recognize winners at a session with monetary awards/certificates.
- Inform students about Annual Meeting social events.
- Invite Grad Students to participate as moderators.
- Promote involvement of students through faculty and advisors.
- Reach out to students at the Annual Meeting for participation in Division sessions the following year.

Annual Meeting ideas

- Identify and schedule presiders or moderators for all symposia, sessions, panels, etc.
- Announce Division events on your Discussion Board or through a *CSA News* article.
- Don't forget Program Enhancement Funds (PEF) or other funding sources to meet your goals and objectives.
- Schedule downtime during your sessions. Consider a short session titled appropriately, i.e. Division Collaboration and Networking.
- Use Mentoring programs (including eMentor@careerplacement.org) to connect members and include a social event. Acknowledge the pairs at your Division Business Meeting (introduce, bring them to the podium, take a picture).
- Promote attendance at your business meetings by providing a lunch or schedule your business meeting between a session and a mixer. Solicit ideas from members for next year's meeting.
- Organize a 5-Minute and Poster Presentation session and award certificates/cash prizes.
- Have students (and all members) introduce themselves at business meetings.
- Use targeted emails, connections during annual meeting, and discussion boards to develop Cross-Division/Community/Society Symposia. Also call or email other leaders and pitch ideas for these sessions.
- Promote attendance at your business meetings by sending out reminders on the morning of the event.
- Promote diversity! Reach out to underrepresented groups to ask them to participate.
- Evaluate invited speakers to ensure diversity.
- Solicit session ideas from your members in person at the business meetings and through the discussion boards.
- Remind members they can interact with leaders at the Annual Meeting and rub elbows with idols in their field!
- Use the annual tour opportunity and other annual meeting networking options to get involved and develop new connections and friendships.

Chapter 3

SSSA Board of Directors and other Leadership



SSSA Board of Directors

Special Board Committee Assignments

Other Leadership Service/Governance

SSSA Board of Directors

The Purpose of the SSSA Board

1. To serve as the policy-making arm of the Society as directed by the SSSA Bylaws. Except for those matters which the Bylaws specify are under the direct authority of the membership of the Society or are specifically designated as responsibilities of stated Society officers. The Board of Directors establishes the policies and revises them when it deems advisable.
2. To have, hold, and administer all property and funds of the Society, in conformity with the Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws.
3. To engage the Chief Executive Officer and other employees as may be needed; however, instead of directly employing personnel, SSSA has an agreement with the Alliance of Crop, Soil, and Environmental Science Societies (ACSESS) to handle its operational activities on a cost-input basis.
4. To continually reassess the current operations and the future role of the Society and of agronomy as a profession. This includes updating the strategic plan regularly and monitoring the plan's progress.
5. To meet twice per year (traditionally in the Spring and at the annual meeting) and at other times as needed, or conduct telephone conference calls or electronic meetings, to conduct Society business. In a meeting of any format, 50% of the voting members of the Board shall constitute a quorum for voting. Official action by the Board is based on a majority vote of the voting members of the Board present in a meeting of any format. Board minutes will be posted online at www.soils.org/about-society/board-minutes

Fiscal Decisions

For fiscal decisions, the SSSA Board of Directors has a Budget and Finance Committee (B&F Committee) who reports financial results during monthly board meetings. The Board of Directors approves the annual operating budget that is recommended by the B&F Committee (prepared in collaboration with headquarters staff), generally at the Annual Meeting. To the extent the Society has special requests for funding not contemplated in the approved budget; the B&F Committee may review the request and make a recommendation for the board to approve the new funding requests. For more information, view the Budget and Finance Committee section later in this chapter.

Board Membership and Responsibilities

Individuals serving on the Board of Directors must hold the Active membership category or another category having the same privileges as active membership. The term of office for Directors begins on January 1 and ends on December 31. The SSSA Board of Directors consists of the following members, serving for the terms indicated:

Executive Board Members

The SSSA Executive Board members are the President, President-Elect, and immediate Past President of SSSA. The SSSA President serves as the presiding officer of the Board. For information on functions and responsibilities, view the guidelines online:

SSSA Executive Committee:

www.soils.org/membership/committees/view/S002

SSSA President:

www.soils.org/membership/committees/view/S001.1

SSSA President-Elect:

www.soils.org/membership/committees/view/S001.2

SSSA Past President:

www.soils.org/membership/committees/view/S001.3

Group Representative Board Members

Divisions will be organized into the following 4 Groups for determining representation on the SSSA Board of Directors:

Agricultural Soil and Food Systems Group

Soil Fertility and Plant Nutrition; Soil and Water Management and Conservation; Nutrient Management and Soil and Plant Analysis

Education and Practicing Professionals Group

Consulting Soil Scientists; Soil Education and Outreach

Fundamental Soil Science Group

Soil Physics; Soil Chemistry; Soil Biology and Biochemistry; Pedology; Soil Mineralogy

Soil and Ecosystem Processes Group

Forest, Range, and Wildland Soils; Wetland Soils; Soils and Environmental Quality; Urban and Anthropogenic Soils

All Groups will have one Board Representative, with an additional six Representatives allocated across the Groups, based on the number of members who choose the Divisions within each Group as their primary (first choice) Division. The Group Representatives to the Board serve a 3-year term. If a Group Representative cannot attend a Board meeting, one of the Division Chairs within the Group may represent the Group at the meeting and vote on all matters that come before the Board. If a Group Representative to the Board should resign or become unavailable to serve, the candidate receiving the next highest number of votes shall automatically succeed to the office to complete the term. If both the Group Representative and the alternate cannot complete the term, then one of the Divisional Past Chairs represented by the Group shall be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve as the Group Representative to the Board.

Other Leadership

Society Committees

Effective operation of the Soil Science Society of America is dependent largely on its committees. Most actions of the Society originate in and are evaluated and recommended by committees. Authority for conducting the Committee business of the Society is given in the SSSA Bylaws of the Soil Science Society of America. Standing Committees are those established by the SSSA Bylaws or by actions of the Board of Directors. Other Committees are established by actions of the SSSA Board of Directors or by the Executive Committee. These are usually called Special Committees. Persons appointed to Society Committees must be members of the Society. The President can make exceptions to the requirement for membership for service on Committees when special expertise or opinion from nonmembers is needed. A list of SSSA Committees can be found online at: www.soils.org/membership/committees/view

Committee Leadership Service

The vision and mission of the Society is advanced with the dedication and commitment of member leaders. Together, Committees develop and recommend policy, provide advice on editorial issues, and assist in creating a rewarding and valuable member experience. Participating as a Society volunteer is truly a rewarding and enjoyable experience. Society Committees are filled by appointment by the respective Society President-Elect. To sign-up for Committee service, complete the form by choosing the Committees on which you would like to serve, online at: www.soils.org/membership/committees/volunteer

The SSSA President-Elect has the responsibility for appointing new SSSA Committee members and Committee Chairs in advance of the SSSA Annual Meeting so they can begin to function during the Annual Meeting.

The Chair of the Committee during the calendar year in which the Annual Meeting is held should schedule a meeting of the Committee during the Annual Meeting. The new Chair and new Committee member(s) should be invited to attend and should be introduced at the meeting. The outgoing Chair should review the past year's activity; assist the new Chair in developing an activity plan for the coming year; and turn over the Committee files to the new Chair. The new Chair may wish to call a meeting of the new Committee later in the week to make further plans and assignments for the coming year. Much of the Committee business and activity may be conducted by email, mail, and phone during the year.

All SSSA Committees are required to submit annual summary reports for consideration by the SSSA Board of Directors and/or the Executive Committee. The SSSA Headquarters Office sends instructions to the Chair. The reports should report the accomplishments during the year; and should list specific recommendations for consideration by the Board.

Task Forces

Special Committees may be appointed by the President as deemed desirable. These are usually called Ad Hoc Committees, Working Groups or may be called a Task Force. A Task Force may study an issue or topic, and on the basis of such study, prepares a report to recommend to the Board of Directors or Executive Committee what actions should be taken or changes made in Society structure, governance, activities, and services.

Appendix



SSSA 2023 Program Planning Manual

www.acsmeetings.org/files/meetings/sssa-prog-planning-manual.pdf

SSSA Division Chairs Guidelines

www.soils.org/membership/committees/view/get-file/S011.01/S011.01

SSSA Committee on Nominations for President Elect

www.soils.org/membership/committees/view/S101

Nominations Committee for Agricultural Soil and Food Systems Group Rep. to the Board

www.soils.org/membership/committees/view/S112.01

Nominations Committee for Education and Practicing Professionals Group Rep. to the Board

www.soils.org/membership/committees/view/S112.02

Nominations Committee for Fundamental Soil Science Group Rep. to the Board

www.soils.org/membership/committees/view/S112.03

Nominations Committee for Soil and Ecosystem Processes Group Rep. to the Board

www.soils.org/membership/committees/view/S112.04

SSSA Bylaws

www.soils.org/files/Governance/sssa-bylaws-2020.pdf

SSSA Annual Reports

www.soils.org/membership/committees/reports



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement

We, as the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America, and Soil Science Society of America Boards of Directors, approve and fully support this statement and affirm our commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in our Societies and sciences. March 2021

Our Vision and Role

We envision a scientific community where every person, regardless of their background and challenges, is able to explore their potential. Our role is to help elevate professional and scientific growth of individuals in all career stages. We proudly serve our members, collaborate with stakeholders, and partner with policymakers to help empower, engage, and cultivate the advancement of all within our scientific community.

Our Pledge

We are committed to enhancing the experiences, opportunities, and safety of all members by creating a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment in our scientific fields of study and throughout the Societies. Our Boards of Directors, Committees, and Staff are working to bring diverse voices to the table and provide unique perspectives to enhance the quality and innovation of our sciences and our scientific organizations. We pledge to be a reflection of the communities we serve through fostering an atmosphere of respect, open communication, and diversity that serves as a model for our members and other stakeholders.

At the American Society of Agronomy (ASA), Crop Science Society of America (CSSA), and Soil Science Society of America (SSSA), our core values guide our efforts and long-standing commitment to proactively build a culture where every person can develop and apply their limitless potential in the fields of agronomy, crop, soil, and environmental sciences. We are committed to increasing diversity in Science, Technology, Education, Agriculture, and Mathematics (STEAM) by seeking out participation from underrepresented groups, in order to build and develop a world in which studying, working, utilizing, contributing and promoting science are open to all.

We define diversity, equity, and inclusion as:

Diversity

Individual diversity is a unique collection of attributes and life experiences that make us each who we are. These include, but are not limited to, national origin, language, race, color, political viewpoints, disability, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, veteran status, career stage, and family structures/backgrounds. Collectively, the diversity of our members helps guide our missions, provides innovative ideas to solve the problems facing our communities and our planet, and provides a richer connection to each other.



“Diversity is not about how we differ. Diversity is about embracing one another’s uniqueness.”

– Ola Joseph, Author

Equity

Equity is providing various levels of support and assistance depending on the specific needs or abilities of individuals to ensure all can succeed. Equity is different from equality in that equality implies treating everyone as if their experiences are exactly the same. Being equitable means acknowledging and addressing structural inequalities—historic and current—that advantage some and disadvantage others. Equal treatment results in equity only if everyone starts with equal access to opportunities.



“Equality is leaving the door open for anyone who has the means to approach it; Equity is ensuring there is a pathway to that door for those who need it.”

– Caroline Belden, Author

Inclusion

Inclusion is to pursue deliberate efforts to ensure that our organizations welcome differences, respectfully listen to diverse perspectives and make every individual feel welcome, empowered, accepted and that they belong.



“Inclusion is not a strategy to help people fit into the systems and structure which exist in our societies. It is about transforming those systems and structures to make it better for everyone.”

– Diane Richler Past President, Inclusion International



Our Commitment

ASA, CSSA, and SSSA are committed to encouraging a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusivity that ensures:

- All members and staff are valued, belong, and can have their voices heard.
- Staff and leaders are able to clearly articulate and reflect our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. They are aware of social context, create positive inclusive environments, eliminate microaggressions, and help each other build genuine relationships and networks.
- All are treated collegially in all communications, public or private.
- Pathways are promoted for students to transition into agricultural and natural science careers that maximize their unique perspectives, competencies, and abilities.
- Leadership understands and works to change the conditions needed to create an environment where everybody can thrive and grow personally, academically, and professionally.
- Scientific career and professional development opportunities are available to support life-long growth, and by extension, promote inclusion for all society members.
- Leadership represents the diversity of our Societies - including the diverse perspectives and beliefs of our members.
- An environment that is safe and free from harassment and other negative behaviors.
- Society policies and activities support diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Our efforts act as an example for other organizations.