

Navigating Gender at Sea

Recommendations for Making Seagoing Work Safer for
Transgender and Gender Diverse Scientists

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Scientists are trained to **recognise** and **challenge** hidden assumptions

That mindset is necessary (but not sufficient) for EDI work



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10.1029/2023AV000927

Peer Review The peer review history for this article is available as a PDF in the Supporting Information.

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Key Point 1:

Limited attention has been given to the challenges faced by transgender and gender diverse (TGD) scientists



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Key Point 2:

TGD people face harassment, gendered berthing issues, and other legal and physical barriers while working at sea



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Key Point 3:

Improvements to increase equity can be made at the individual, chief scientist and officer, and institutional levels

Who

Do

Example

Avoid

Everyone

Refer to everyone the way they ask you to refer to them (e.g. names, pronouns, identities)

Introduce yourself using the name you prefer and your pronouns, to set the precedent for others

Requiring everyone to state their pronouns. This can force people to either misgender themselves or out themselves to others

Handle misgendering incidents briefly, directly, and on your own

“Where's Jason?
She went for lunch.
They went for lunch?
Right, yes, they did”

Telling the misgendered person about the incident or expect them to handle it later

Who

Do

Example

Avoid

Chief scientists and ship officers

Include respect for transgender people in safety / harassment training. Include indigenous genders (e.g. two-spirit)

Assume questions around berths, bathrooms, and pronouns will arise. Prepare all authority figures aboard

Avoiding the topic. At least 1% of the US is trans / nonbinary. 0.1-2% are intersex

Ask for berthing preferences from all scientists onboard

Our berthings have 2 bunks. What individuals or genders would you prefer to share with?

Assuming you can pair people by gender based on names, appearance, or gender markers on legal identification

Who

Do

Example

Avoid

**Chief scientists,
ship officers, and
institutions**

Collect inclusive data on TGD people that go to sea

Collect demographics data on both gender and (separately!) transgender status

Use inadequate sets of identifiers such as 'man or woman or other' and male / trans male or female / trans female'

Adopt inclusive ethics and codes of conduct, disseminate best practices

Share relevant codes of conduct and best practices with scientists and crew

Assuming that everyone already knows appropriate conduct and best practices

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