2022 NRAO/GBO Climate Survey Results

Human Resources

Survey Overview

- Human Resources engaged Mercer to conduct a climate survey to measure employee engagement and opinions to develop action plans to address areas that could result in positive change. The survey also allowed us to compare changes that have occurred since the last survey in 2019.
  - The survey was available June 13th 2022 through July 8th 2022
  - Results of the survey were provided to HR in August 2022 for analysis and preparation for an executive summary and areas for improvement
  - Recommended action items and next steps are discussed at the conclusion of the survey results

Survey Background & Participation

- 2022 survey had a **64%** participation rate (372 out of 578 respondents)

  – 2019 survey had a **56%** participation rate (300 out of 536 respondents)

- 2022 participation by location:

	Response Count	
Location	2022	2019
Charlottesville, Virginia	104	104
Socorro, New Mexico	89	80
Green Bank, West Virginia	66	45
Remote	27	3
Very Large Array, New Mexico	19	19
Chile	17	6
VLBA Station	2	5
Prefer not to say	45	34

2022 Executive Summary
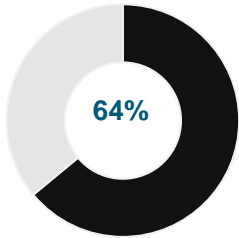
Participation
64%
372 out of 578 eligible employees completed the questionnaire

81% Favorable
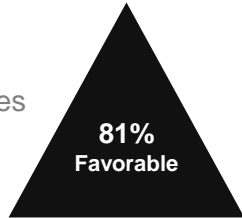
Engagement is strong with just over 8 out of 10 employees feeling motivated, proud, and satisfied working for AUI/NRAO. Choosing to stay with the Organization has also increased notably from 2019.

Scores continue to grow in 2022

52 of 67 items improved since the 2019 survey. Notable improvement (+5 pts FAV or more) was seen across 17 of those items.

STRENGTHS

Immediate Supervisor
Strong Scores Continue to improve

- **92%** (+6 pts) indicate that they respect their supervisor.
- **90%** (+1 pts) report that their supervisor knows their job very well.
- **87%** (+4 pts) of employees say that their supervisors seems to value them.
- **86%** (+5 pts) say their supervisor encourages teamwork.

Work / Life Flexibility
High levels of Favorability

- **97%** (+3 pts) indicate their immediate supervisor is flexible when personal situations come up.
- **88%** (+2 pts) feel their immediate supervisor is sensitive to the relationship between work life and personal life.
- **88%** say the Organization provides the flexibility employees need to be effective and productive (new item).

Management Effectiveness
Consistency with some room for growth

- **92%** (0 pts) understand the role the NSF plays in supporting the mission and vision of the Observatories.
- **88%** (+1 pts) indicate that Observatory management doesn't tolerate harassment in the workplace.
- However, only **65%** (+3 pts) of employees feel that management is fair and consistent in its application of policies.

OPPORTUNITY AREAS for ACTION

Performance Management
Remains the lowest scoring dimension

- Just **36%** (0 pts) of respondents reported that the organization deals well with poor performers.
- Furthermore, only **57%** (+2 pts) report that there is equitable workloads on teams, such that there are no team members who "just get by".
- Less than 6 out of 10 employees (**58%**, +3 pts) feel that promotions are based on qualifications.

Diversity & Inclusion
Showing room for growth

- **90%** (+4 pts) of employees feel supportive of efforts to build an inclusive and diverse workforce, however only **59%** (0 pts) think the Organization has a diverse workforce, and just **66%** (0 pts) feel that their division recruits diverse candidates.
- Additionally, only **58%** (-1 pts) feel that people in their division seek the participation of others who represent different backgrounds and viewpoints.

Wellbeing & Stress Management
Mental health awareness

- Only **34%** (-3 pts) of respondents indicated that their job **does not** produce a large amount of personal stress.
- Furthermore, only **69%** said that they are able to detach from work during non-work time (new item).
- In regards to the pandemic, only **64%** reported feeling a sense of connection and community with colleagues, while only **66%** reported having the tools and resources to manage stress effectively (new items).

Notably Improved Items

Of the 67 SA-SD scalar items with trend to 2019, **17 have notably improved**. Dimensional areas that have seen the most improvement include Learning & Development, Fairness & Respect, and Immediate Supervisor.

Dimension		Responses	OverallFav	Neutral	Overall UnFav	Trend	Global Norms	Higher Ed Norms
Learning & Development	58. I am encouraged to participate in the Observatory wide professional development program.	348	61%	26%	12%	+18 ↑	---	---
Fairness & Respect	10. Mutual respect is shown across divisions and sites.	362	69%	19%	12%	+17 ↑	---	---
Fairness & Respect	59. Opportunities to receive training are fairly distributed.	321	72%	21%	7	+15 ↑	---	---
Learning & Development	57. I am familiar with the Observatory wide professional development program	353	75%	15%	10	+14 ↑	---	---
Fairness & Respect	9. Scientific staff members and non-scientific staff members show mutual respect and good collaboration towards one another.	366	74%	14%	12%	+14 ↑	---	---
Learning & Development	55. There is someone at work who encourages my development.	364	66%	20%	14%	+9 ↑	---	---
Fairness & Respect	19. I know how to report a concern, issue, or complaint (e.g., through my supervisor, HR representative, or Ethics Point portal).	370	91%	6	4	+7 ↑	---	---
Immediate Supervisor	36. New perspectives are solicited and valued by my supervisor.	359	83%	11%	6	+7 ↑	---	---
Immediate Supervisor	34. My manager holds department meetings and provides a forum to discuss department/Organization business.	352	83%	10	7	+7 ↑	---	---
Immediate Supervisor	40. I receive timely recognition or praise for doing good work.	350	79%	14%	8	+7 ↑	+11 ↑	+19 ↑

Notably Improved Items (Continued)

Of the 67 SA-SD scalar items with trend to 2019, **17 have notably improved**. Dimensional areas that have seen the most improvement include Learning & Development, Fairness & Respect, and Immediate Supervisor.

Dimension		Responses	OverallFav	Neutral	Overall UnFav	Trend	Global Norms	Higher Ed Norms
Immediate Supervisor	48. I have an immediate supervisor who I respect.	363	92%		6	+6 ↑	---	---
Employee Engagement	77. I would choose to stay here even if offered the same pay and benefits elsewhere.	346	73%	14%	13%	+6 ↑	+4	+12 ↑
Fairness & Respect	⊙ 8. Management ensures employees are treated fairly and equitably.	364	66%	18%	16%	+6 ↑	---	---
Immediate Supervisor	35. My supervisor encourages teamwork.	359	86%		11% 4	+5 ↑	---	---
Immediate Supervisor	41. My supervisor gives me appropriate credit and thanks for the contributions I make in my job.	355	83%		11% 6	+5 ↑	---	---
Learning & Development	53. I am periodically provided with stretch assignments/those providing me with additional challenge so that I may grow and learn in my role.	356	73%	17%	10	+5 ↑	---	---
Work Environment	25. Employees are willing to reveal problems to management.	353	65%	20%	14%	+5 ↑	---	---

2022 Climate Survey Results

Survey Dimensions

- Immediate Supervisor

- Employee Engagement

- Management Effectiveness

- COVID Response

- Remote Working

- Fairness & Respect

- Learning & Development

- Balance & Wellbeing

- Diversity & Inclusion

- Performance Management

Immediate Supervisor

- My supervisor knows their job very well. 90%

- My manager holds department meetings and provides a forum to discuss department/Organization business. 83%

- My supervisor encourages teamwork. 86%

- New perspectives are solicited and valued by my supervisor. 83%

- My supervisor meets with me at appropriate intervals so we may discuss work progress. 83%

- My supervisor helps me succeed in my job. 80%

- My supervisor stands up for me when inappropriately challenged for my work. 76%

- I receive timely recognition or praise for doing good work. 79%

- My supervisor gives me appropriate credit and thanks for the contributions I make in my job. 83%

- My supervisor seems to value me. 87%

- I have an immediate supervisor who I respect. 92%

Employee Engagement

- Overall, 81% of employees are engaged. Employee engagement continues to perform strong and is above global norm
  - I am motivated to go beyond what is normally expected to help the Organization be successful. 80%
  - I am proud to work here. 89%
  - Considering everything, I am satisfied to work for my Organization. 83%
  - Overall, how likely would you be to recommend your Organization as a great place to work to a friend or relative? 78%
  - I would choose to stay here even if offered the same pay and benefits elsewhere. 73%

Management Effectiveness

- I understand the role the National Science Foundation (NSF) plays in supporting the mission and vision of the Observatories. 92%

- I understand the role the NSF plays in funding the Observatories. 94%

- The Organization is making changes necessary for its future success. 69%

- Management is accessible and values my input. 69%

- Management is fair and consistent in its application of policies. 65%

- My Organization is an ethical Organization and worthy of the public's trust. 84%

- Observatory management does not tolerate bullying. 74%

- Observatory management does not tolerate harassment. 81%

- Observatory management does not tolerate sexual harassment. 88%

COVID Response

- Overall, 79% of respondents answered strongly agree or agree to being satisfied with the COVID response.

  - My Organization is taking the right steps to support employees during this pandemic. 82%

  - My Organization is doing a good job communicating with employees during this pandemic. 84%

  - My Organization has made employee safety a top priority during this pandemic. 86%

  - My supervisor is doing the right things to support me during this pandemic. 90%

  - My supervisor is doing a good job keeping our team aligned and connected during this pandemic. 84%

  - Overall, I feel a sense of connection and community with my colleagues at this time. 64%

  - I have the tools, resources, and support I need to manage stress effectively during this pandemic. 66%

Closer look at Financial Support

- Overall, just 7 out of 10 employees feel the Observatory is responding effectively to the current national financial issues
  - I feel that the Observatory is doing what it can to respond effectively to the current national financial issues/challenges (e.g., inflation). 72%
  - There is some variability across work locations/age groups:
    - Those who indicated VLA as their location reported in at 65%; prefer not to say reported in at 56%
    - Those 29 or younger reported in at 58% and those 30-39 reported in at 59%

Remote Working

- Overall, 78% of respondents answered strongly agree or agree to remote working

  - My Organization provides the flexibility (e.g., the ability to work from home, flexible work schedules, part time options) I need to be effective and productive. 88%

  - I have the right tools and resources (equipment, parts, supplies, hardware, software, etc.) to work remotely. 81%

  - I am able to detach from work during non-work time (i.e., when I choose not to be working). 69%

  - As appropriate, I can maintain a reasonable balance between my personal life and work life while working remotely. 75%

Fairness & Respect

- Management ensures employees are treated fairly and equitably. 66%

- Scientific staff members and non-scientific staff members show mutual respect and good collaboration towards one another. 74%

- Mutual respect is shown across divisions and sites. 69%

- Internal employees are given fair consideration for job openings. 75%

- I know how to report a concern, issue, or complaint (e.g., through my supervisor, HR representative, or Ethics Point portal). 91%

- I can have an open conversation with my immediate supervisor regarding my treatment and the treatment of others within the Organization. 83%

- If I have a complaint in my division, I can discuss it with my supervisor and it will be handled fairly. 83%

- Opportunities to receive training are fairly distributed. 72%

Learning & Development

- I have a chance to do challenging and interesting work. 85%

- I am periodically provided with stretch assignments/those providing me with additional challenge so that I may grow and learn in my role. 73%

- There is opportunity for me to learn new skills at work. 82%

- There is someone at work who encourages my development. 66%

- I receive the training I need to do my job safely. 87%

- I am familiar with the Observatory wide professional development program 75%

- I am encouraged to participate in the Observatory wide professional development program. 61%

Balance & Wellbeing

- My immediate supervisor is flexible when I have a personal or family situation that I have to take care of. 97%

- My supervisor is sensitive to the relationship between my work life and personal life. 88%

- My job produces a large amount of personal stress. 34%

Work Environment

- The Organization fosters a climate of openness and trust. 64%

- I believe my Organization values its employees. 71%

- My department fosters a positive work environment. 82%

- Employees are willing to reveal problems to management. 65%

- I can report unethical behavior or practices without fear of retaliation. 72%

Diversity & Inclusion

- Overall, 70% of respondents answered strongly agree or agree to the Observatory having strong Diversity & Inclusion.
  - I think my Organization has a diverse workforce. 59%
  - I value having the opportunity to participate in Organizational sponsored events that support diversity within the workforce. 63%
  - People in my division actively seek the participation of people who represent different backgrounds and viewpoints. 58%
  - My division actively/appropriately recruits diverse candidates. 66%
  - I am supportive of efforts to build an inclusive and diverse workforce and climate. 90%
  - I can have an open conversation with my immediate supervisor regarding diversity questions or issues. 82%

Performance Management

- Overall, 67% of respondents answered strongly agreed or agreed with performance management.
    - Employees are held accountable for the end result of their work. 70%
    - On my team, some people do most of the work while others do just enough to get by. 57%
    - The Organization does not usually tolerate poor performers. 36%
    - Promotions are made based on employees' qualifications. 58%
    - I know what is expected of me at work. 92% (above global norm)
    - I have the appropriate materials and equipment to do my work. 86% (above global norm)

Uniquely Scaled Items

Topic	Summary of Findings
Gender Equity	**Just over half (51%) of respondents** indicated that **men and women are equally able to define and influence the culture** at the Observatory. However, the **majority of the additional responses** indicates that **men have more influence (21%)**.
Career Advancement	The **top five answers** to getting ahead at the Organization include: **1) performing their job well, 2) demonstrating technical competence, 3) willing to accept responsibility, 4) getting along well with others, 5) demonstrating strong leadership skills.**
Communication Channels	Overall, respondents **slightly prefer to access information through the HR Webpage (34%)**, compared to **HR representatives (33%)**, and their **direct manager/supervisor (30%)** – however **the differences are not notable**. Demographically, **Remote workers** seem to prefer **the HR Webpage (42%)**, while **the Very Large Array and Chile** prefer **HR Representatives (39%, and 43%, respectively)**.
Family Issues & Work Obstacles	Respondents indicate that **the family issues that have the most impact on their ability to work effectively** are **caring for aging parents or relatives**, followed by **childcare, sick family members, and "other".**
Work Environment	The highest percentage of counter-productive work environment behaviors reported by respondents were: • **Hurtful Gossip** (6% Personally Experienced, 13% Witnessed) • Locations with higher percentages of **Experienced**: **Remote (10%), Charlottesville (6%), and Socorro (6%)** • Locations with higher percentages of **Witnessed**: **Green Bank (20%), Very Large Array (16%), and Socorro (12%)** • **Hostile Work Environment** (9% Personally Experienced, 10% Witnessed) • Locations with higher percentages of **Experienced**: **Charlottesville (10%), Green Bank (8%), and Socorro and Remote (both 7%)** • Locations with higher percentages of **Witnessed**: **Green Bank (15%), Very Large Array (14%), and Charlottesville (9%)** • **Bullying** (9% Personally Experienced, 10% Witnessed) • Locations with higher percentages of **Experienced**: **Remote (10%), Charlottesville (10%), and Socorro (9%)** • Locations with higher percentages of **Witnessed**: **Green Bank (14%), Very Large Array (8%), Socorro (8%), and Charlottesville (8%)**

Opportunity Areas

Performance Management	Response
Continue driving accountability, especially in the areas of dealing with poor performers. Recognize managers that do a good job of identifying and holding these individuals accountable.	• Performance Management 101 and Manager Orientation provides managers/employees an opportunity to learn about performance management. These trainings provide managers with information and guidance on how to set expectations, encourage check-ins, recognize strong performers, and how to approach performance improvement plans. • Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs) are detailed in both trainings so managers better understand steps needed to address poor performers.
In terms of promotions, increase transparency around expectations across the organization by communicating defined standards. Look to clarify requirements for promotions, should the employees be interested, help them develop plans to achieve it.	• HR will be announcing a new compensation webpage that will provide employees the opportunity to search job families, titles, and how to effectively work towards promotion. This will encourage transparency and detail requirements of how an employee may get to the next level. • HR led trainings on perf mgmt and compensation which provided employees with details on the promotion process. • Continue to coach and encourage managers on how to be open and honest in setting expectations and what will be required in order to be considered for promotions.

Opportunity Areas Cont.

Diversity & Inclusion	Response
59% of employees indicate the workforce is diverse, but 90% support the creation of diverse and inclusive workforce.	Ongoing collaboration with the Employee Diversity Group (EDG) has helped to improve transparency and to further refine recruitment strategies that target diversity focused advertising AND reach a wider, more inclusive audience. Over the last 2 years, we have: • Enhanced our career site. • Implemented OFCCP advertising to include additional diverse job boards and state employment agencies. • Continued implementation of a Candidate Relationship Mgmt (CRM) tool. • Continued participation in career fairs focused on under-represented communities and universities • Implemented a centralized recruitment budget which has allowed HR to optimize, and more accurately track, spending and ROI. The result of these efforts is more diverse candidate pools. The ratio of non-minority candidates has dropped by 10% of the total % of the candidate pool in the last 2 years. The EDG has continued to promote diversity & inclusion in the workplace with various webinars and sessions offered to all staff. Appropriately calibrate job requirements to attract diverse applicants. Strive for consistency in evaluating qualifications among candidates. This will require additional training for hiring managers to maintain accountability during the interview process.
58% (-1 pts) feel that people in their division seek the participation of others who represent different backgrounds and viewpoints.	Consider offering targeted training to managers/supervisors about how to seek participation from all. Opportunity to include this topic in the Manager Orientation training. Research new bias trainings for managers in topics of race, gender, neurodiversity, etc.

Opportunity Areas Cont.

Wellness & Stress Management	Response
34% of respondents answered agree/strongly agree that their jobs produce large amount of personal stress (34% neutral; 32% disagreed) unsure how to disconnect to maintain work/life balance. Departments could distribute work more effectively to ensure employees do not feel overworked	• Observatories have been very generous with time off, flexible work schedules, etc. to ensure employees have the opportunity to step away as needed. 97% report their supervisor is supportive/flexible when needing to take time off for personal/family issues. • During HR trainings, encourage managers to distribute work not only on current workloads compared to others, but how each employee can manage/deliver without becoming overworked.
Do not feel a strong connection among community or colleagues; need resources/tools to support their needs effectively to maintain connection and lower stress	• Continue to encourage use of the Employee Assistance Plan (EAP) for mental health resources • Encourage managers to schedule regular check-ins with employees (encouraged during newly implemented Manager Orientation)

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