The eXtreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment
2017 XSEDE STAFF CLIMATE STUDY REPORT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

In June 2013, the eXtreme Science and Engineering Discovery Environment (XSEDE) initially requested an annual organizational climate study to understand working conditions and staff satisfaction. This executive summary report includes key findings from the 2013–2017 survey data and provides recommendations for improving organizational climate.

Key Findings

- Most dimensions continue to increase from 2013 baseline scores and meet or exceed comparable project ratings. The highest 2017 gains were made in Inclusion, Leadership & Management, and Support & Belonging.

- Respondents requested training on tools used by XSEDE staff such as Jira and expressed appreciation for existing offerings on new resources and services.

- Communication Tools continues to be one of the highest rated indices in this study. Some staff suggest further improving communications by replacing existing virtual conferencing tools with Zoom or WebEx.

- Staff rated Leadership & Management positively, but still lower than Level 1 – 3 managers and would like more face-to-face engagement opportunities and coordination between Level 2 and 3 areas.

- Level 1 – 3 managers and those working less than 5 years on XSEDE view the XSEDE Staff Wiki more positively than other groups.

- Respondents reported significantly higher communication of the XSEDE decision-making process and its efficiency in 2017 compared to baseline ratings. Requests continue for opt-in performance reviews.

- The new Decision-Making index module regarding budgets, staffing, metrics, and reporting was rated relatively low. Comments centered on input level, transparency, and timelines for these processes.

- Unlike previous years where men rated Equity items significantly higher than women, no gender differences were found within this index in 2017. Personal experience with discrimination, however, continues to differ by gender.

- Underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities (URM) rated Equity lower than majority respondents, though personal experience with discrimination did not differ.

Recommendations

❖ **Staff Training:** Continue to offer staff training on new XSEDE resources and services. Expand training offerings to include staff tools such as Jira.

❖ **Communication Tools:** Consider formally supporting the use of alternative communication tools (i.e. Zoom or WebEx) that are more compatible with a variety of systems.

❖ **Collaboration and Coordination:** Encourage regular opportunities for face-to-face engagement between staff as well as L2 and 3 areas at PEARC, program area retreats, and other means when possible.

❖ **Human Resources:** Continue development of optional staff evaluation forms and processes to be included in local site evaluations by staff request.

❖ **Decision-Making:** Consider evaluating the finance portal's ability to address concerns regarding budgets and staffing. Allow flexibility in reporting for activities that are not suited to current timeframes.

❖ **Equity:** Consider partnering with organizations that study and promote representation in HPC such as the National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT), Women in HPC (WHPC), or the Women in Science & Engineering Leadership Institute (WISELI) to explore how equity can be improved within the organization. Couple these activities with additional training to improve cultural competence beyond race, ethnicity, and gender to include non-HPC disciplines.