The What - what about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion is important to your group?

The University of Texas at Austin is one of the largest employers in central Texas and among the most diverse campuses in the United States (see https://diversity.utexas.edu/actionplan/). The make-up of staff in Information Technology Services (ITS) should reflect the body of the community we serve. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are the essence of making ITS the best it can be to meet the unique challenges of our world-class campus.

Innovation has been a long-standing core value of ITS, but to be truly innovative we must have staff with divergent experiences and ideas to brainstorm, iterate, and spark healthy debate to make our services and support more flexible, more accessible, and more inclusive.

The Why - reason(s) for your submission for seed grant, what makes this a priority for you?

The main goal of this project is for ITS to modernize our recruiting processes to better align with industry best practices in diversity, inclusion, and equity and respect the values of the Financial and Administrative Services portfolio. ITS requires a strong pool of IT talent which is even more clear in today's post-COVID society where technology has become ubiquitous for all. The steep and fast curve of the new technological landscape requires finding the best staff to serve our customers and that means becoming more diverse, more inclusive, and a truly fair environment. We need to recruit and hire staff of diversified cultural and professional backgrounds, sexual orientations, genders, religions, nations of origin, ages, marital statuses, people with disabilities, veteran statuses, and ethnicities.

It is imperative that we execute these best practices to maintain competitiveness in IT recruiting. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics states “computer and information technology occupations are projected to grow 11 percent from 2019 to 2029, much faster than the average for all occupations.” (https://www.bls.gov/ooh/computer-and-information-technology/home.htm)

The How - how you plan to use the grant? What do you want to achieve? What does success look like?

Our goals for using this grant are to:

- Evaluate, select, and implement an implicit bias language checker for all ITS job descriptions so that no candidate turns away due to unintended exclusionary language.
- Expand the number of online locations where job openings are posted to targeted audiences so that the net is cast to a wider pool. Currently the team posts to The University of Texas at Austin websites and relies on scrapers to find and publish the open roles.
- Assess and align internal recruiting processes with the latest best practices for diversity and inclusion to create a stronger ITS that is fair.
While units around campus have hiring freezes, ITS as of late August has 5 job openings that are either pending approval or are actively in recruitment. As we evolve to operating with 90% of staff remote, there is now an opportunity to source more diverse candidates from around the nation.

To confirm that these efforts are effective our marker of success will be to collect and review at least 15 submissions sourced from each job posting site selected, with the target of bringing at least 1 quality candidate to a first-round interview. The target will be to hire at least 3 candidates either sourced from the job sites selected, or who are in underrepresented groups as defined by the University Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan: people with disabilities, racially and ethnically diverse staff, and LGBTQ, gender nonbinary, and gender nonconforming staff. (https://diversity.utexas.edu/diversity-and-inclusion-action-plan/implementation-and-resource-guide/)