Diversity Statement - Ryo Suzuki

I am committed to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout my career. This statement outlines my goal to improve diversity through my research, teaching, and mentoring activities, particularly for those who are identified as underrepresented groups such as women, indigenous people, and people with disabilities.

Fostering Diversity in My Research Group and Department: Currently, there are substantial diversity gaps in computer science education. Addressing these gaps is crucial, particularly in graduate and undergraduate admissions. To this end, I am committed to recruiting students from a diverse array of social, cultural, and gender backgrounds. For example, I aim to allocate approximately 50% of available positions to female students. This practice has resulted in 35-40% of my graduate students being women. In addition, I aim to recruit students from diverse social and cultural backgrounds, with over 60% of my students being international, representing a variety of cultures in different countries. Furthermore, as a mentor, I actively promote the appreciation and cultivation of diversity among my students. We engage together in various activities and educational opportunities that reinforce this commitment. These include participating in the University of Calgary's Diversity Days and EDI (Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) workshops, celebrating events like Ada Lovelace Day, and undertaking Diversity and Ethics Training. I also encourage my students to attend the International Conference on Computers and Accessibility (ACM ASSETS), which provides insights into how our research can make technology more accessible and inclusive. My research group values diversity and inclusion, as it is critically important for human-centered design. We believe that diversity is necessary to design inclusive user interfaces for a wide range of people. Therefore, I will be committed to fostering diversity within my research team and department.

Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment for Classrooms: As an instructor, I always aim to create an inclusive and accessible learning environment in classroom instruction, accommodating those from various backgrounds and those with special needs. For example, in my courses, I ensure that lectures, assignments, and reading materials are accessible to students with various needs and disabilities. Additionally, I provide extra quiz sessions to support students who need additional assistance, such as those with dyslexia or those who are unable to attend classes due to family or health reasons. These sessions are often scheduled at flexible times and sometimes offered online to accommodate varying schedules and commitments. Through these measures, I always aim to ensure that all students have equal opportunities to succeed in their studies.

Enhancing Diversity and Inclusion Through My Research Work: I am actively involved in promoting diversity, inclusion, and equity through my research work. My PhD research began as a research assistant for Prof. Tom Yeh's *3D Printed Tactile Picture Books* project. This project aims to make picture books accessible and readable for children with visual impairments. As a part of this project, I developed FluxMarker [ASSETS 2017], which aims to create dynamic tactile books for people with visual impairments by leveraging actuated tangible user interfaces. During this design process, I conducted interviews with over twenty individuals with visual impairments. These interactions were eye-opening, and I learned that current interface designs often fall short in accessibility, and how accessible technologies can make a significant impact on their daily lives. The insights I gained from this project have profoundly influenced my perspective on the importance of diversity and inclusion, guiding my ongoing commitment to incorporate these values into my research.

Promoting Diversity through Academic Services: My dedication to fostering diversity extends into my academic service roles. As an example, when I served as a co-chair for the UIST Student Innovation Contest, we placed a strong emphasis on ensuring diversity among both the participating teams and the jury members. This was achieved by intentionally selecting individuals from diverse backgrounds, nationalities, and genders. I apply the same principles in other service roles, including faculty search committee roles at the University of Calgary and organizing committee roles for ACM CHI and UIST.

In conclusion, through these experiences, I have developed a strong belief in the importance of diversity in research, teaching, mentoring, and services. Recognizing the importance of diversity, inclusion, and equity, I am and will be committed to promoting these values as a junior faculty member.