

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) survey: report

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List of suggestions from postdocs regarding actions that we wish had been taken

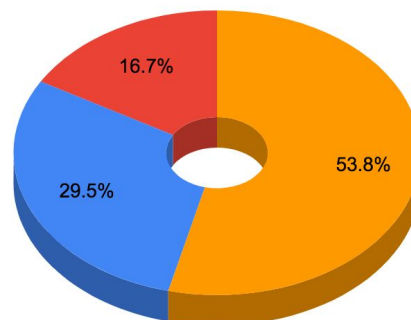
[Dept. and lab-based initiatives](#)

List of actions taken by departments and labs (sharing our own department and lab was optional in the survey). This list should both help the community in recognizing the actions taken and being aware of them, as well as in inspiring for more actions

Department-based answers:

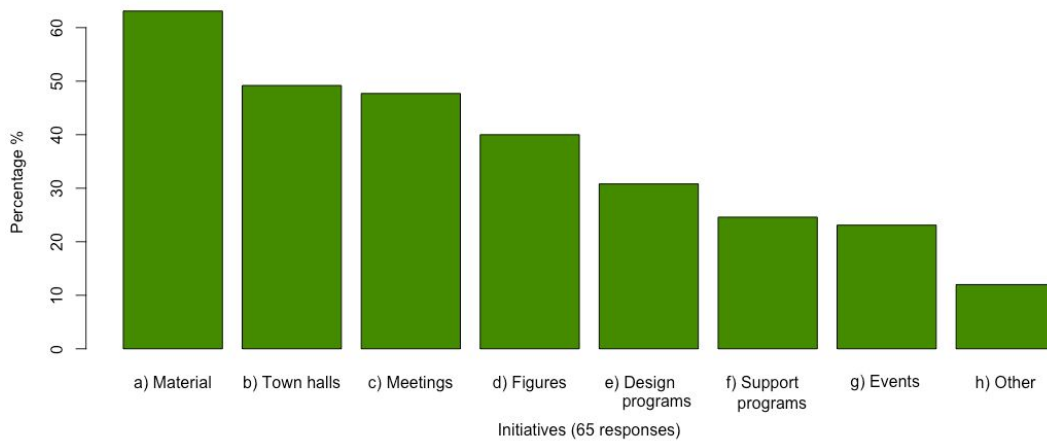
Has your department/school recently taken actions to discuss and improve DEI issues?

● Yes, but I think more can be done. ● Yes, I am satisfied with the actions taken.
● No, I am not aware of any action taken.



If yes, could you briefly explain what your department has done?
(65 responses)

a) Shared material (e.g. readings, websites).....	63.1%
b) Departmental town halls.....	49.2%
c) Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly).....	47.4%
d) Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department.....	40.0%
e) Designated specific departmental DEI programs.....	30.8%
f) Supported specific DEI programs.....	24.6%
g) Offered classes and events with invited speakers.....	23.1%
h) Other.....	12%



Other actions (from the option “Other”):

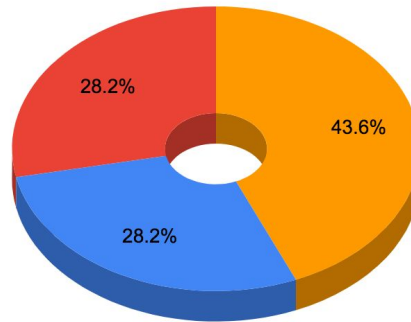
- The department seminar series now requires >50% speakers to be from URM backgrounds
- It conducted a climate survey
- A ground up committee was formed (not top down from the department leadership) and we meet regularly to formulate a DEI plan and goals which we will bring to leadership. They appear supportive at this time, but there has yet to be concrete support yet.
- There were some events that were organized by the grad students and postdocs and supported by individual staff. This group also wrote a letter with demands addressed to the department but I am not aware of an official answer or reaction.
- DEI efforts have been focused in the graduate program (which I still receive emails from, but other postdocs may not).
- I am aware of actions being taken by and for graduate students in MCB
- Many of the above are in the works but not yet started.
- None of these...we talked about it once.
- There is a lot of talk about DEI but this doesn't translate to anything.

- I'm not 100% sure as post docs aren't really folded into the broader department community

Lab-based answers:

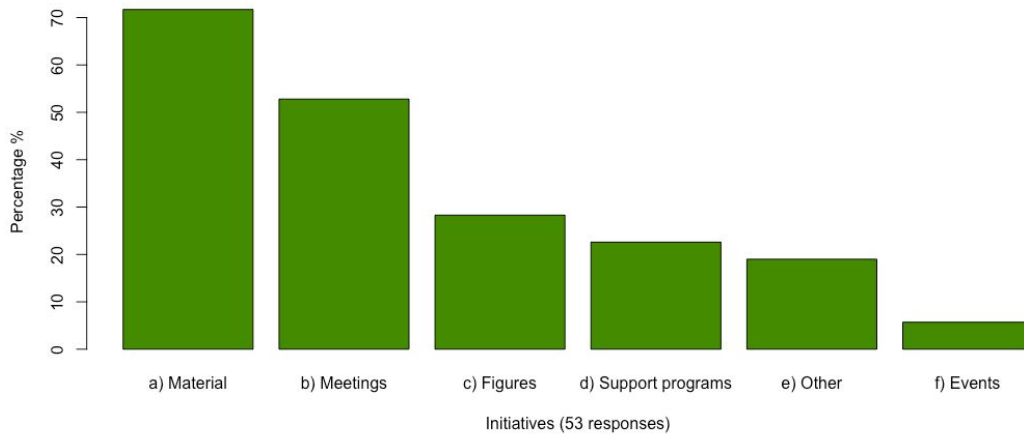
Has your lab recently taken actions to discuss and improve DEI issues?

- Yes, but I think more can be done.
- Yes, I am satisfied with the actions taken.
- No, I am not aware of any action taken.



If yes, could you briefly explain what your lab has done?
(53 responses)

- a) Shared material (e.g. readings, websites).....71.7%
- b) Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly).....52.8%
- c) Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the lab.....28.3%
- d) Supported specific DEI programs.....22.6%
- e) Other.....19%
- f) Offered classes and events with invited speakers.....5.7%



Other actions (from the option “Other”):

- We added a DEI part to the lab website with a list of actions and we included DEI discussions once a month in the lab meetings, also with the idea to keep the lab page up to date.
- We put together a diversity and inclusion statement and held several discussions
- We made topic of discussion in lab meetings (but not regularly)
- My lab is quite small, but we have discussed DEI issues regularly, especially in the context of hiring
- We observed shutdownSTEM, general conversations
- We had a single meeting to discuss DEI issues
- We met once to discuss
- We organised one meeting
- None of these, a one time discussion.

Our ideas

Are there any actions you wish had been taken,
either at a department- or lab-level?

58 people gave suggestions. We divided the answers into the following categories: 1. more DEI efforts and initiatives; 2. better hiring practices and 3; personal experiences, with sub-categories for category 1.

1. More DEI effort and initiatives

- **Hiring specialized people for DEI work/ form a DEI team for mandatory trainings**
- **More concrete actions**
- **Clear commitment**
- **Regular meetings/more discussion**
- **Sharing more information/ more sense of a community**
- **More outreach/volunteering opportunities**
- **Faculty evaluation**
- **Focus on mentoring:**
- **Survey to identify “who we are”**
- **More self-reflection and acknowledgement of events**
- **DEI newsletter**

2. Better hiring practices

3. Personal experience

In particular, the given answers were as follows:

1. MORE DEI EFFORT AND INITIATIVES:

Hiring specialized people for DEI work/ form a DEI team for mandatory trainings:

- I would like to see much more effort being made from the top to actually make DEI a priority. By simply acknowledging that a committee of volunteers has formed to improve the department (institute) is not enough. Volunteer efforts from people not trained in DEI work and doing this above and beyond their normal workplace duties is not going to make lasting impacts in DEI. It is time for leadership to come forward with their strong vision and support for these efforts, including hiring experts to help the motivated volunteers, and also ideally paying people for doing DEI work. Otherwise, using the committees that have formed as "proof" that they are "doing something" towards DEI efforts is completely misleading.
- At a department-level, I think there should be a designated DEI team that can offer regular meetings, training and surveys to assess the DEI efforts on a regular basis. I think this should apply to the whole campus as well so that the DEI efforts are progressing at a similar pace across different departments.
- It is no wonder the wellness of students and postdocs in the department is so bad. The department should wake up. Mandatory workshops, mandatory all-person discussions, regular check ins by supervisors, and better handling when problems occur.
- Have inclusion officer for each lab that organizes inclusive activities
- Anti-black racism implicit bias training
- Hire a designated staff member to work on DEI issues
- Specific trainings (e.g. for/about networking, collaborating, negotiating, dealing with imposter syndrome, implicit bias), more opportunities and support for networking especially now during remote work, more and personalized career advice
- Formal DEI leadership training for postdocs
- Having a third party person (i.e., someone from outside of the lab group and department) who is trained in DEI-related issues and strategies who can be available to occasionally meet with and discuss DEI at the lab (or research group) level.
- Implementing paid DEIO positions or supplemental funding for graduate students and postdocs to compensate for their time spent on these efforts

More concrete actions:

- I think conversations and awareness-raising are an important step, but would love to see the continuation or increase of more concrete actions (training or mentorship for BIPOC students/faculty, more systematic and transparent platforms to increase visibility of ESPM scholars' profiles and work etc.)
- Lab-level it would have been nice to see some actions taken
- More direct action to implement things that are being talked about
- Further clarity on what will be done to rectify hidden curriculum issues
- Engagement from the leaders with leadership by example
- Financial support of iMCB, better support of efforts in general. I'd like them to put their money where their mouth is. It feels a lot like lip service on the best days.

- Eliminating racial disparities in facility usage rate charges, startup funding, and other forms of compensation between faculty.

Clear commitment:

- Concrete and credible pledges to commit to DEI, independent if it is currently fashionable or not
- Commitment to APS Bridge Program
- A commitment to creating a healthier lab environment.
- A verbal commitment to recruit minority scholars at the undergraduate and graduate level and an actionable program for both
- It would be good if the department made clear to us that they are committed to DEI and tell us about their DEI strategy.
- Generally I'm disappointed because I haven't seen any commitments to concrete actions, yet.
- Acknowledging existing weaknesses or areas needing improvement, important in feeling that DEI is something that matters and taken seriously
- Statement acknowledging problems and clear list of strategies being implemented and highlighting ways for each of us to get involved.
- Most initiatives have been started by students, not actually the department or PI
- Any initiatives at a department-level would be welcome since there are no known initiatives at the moment

Regular meetings/more discussion:

- Holding regular meetings once a month
- More talk about how discussions are encouraged. They still feel like "rocking the boat"
- Maybe a town hall or seminar to discuss the issue
- Annual meeting for diversity and inclusion for the lab
- I think the conversation has been good, probably is not enough but I hope to see this discussion moving forward
- Meetings with everyone, workshops. At a lab level, acknowledge that this needs to be discussed, open conversations about DEI.
- Symposia/seminar series directly addressing DEI issues and giving trainees resources to help with DEI efforts
- Maybe a regular discussion with an expert that would lead it
- Arrange small/focus group regular meetings
- Organize meetings with the supervisor and colleagues to talk about DEI.
- The department has recently hired a native American faculty and is taking diversity seriously I guess but there are not enough discussions around it either at the departmental or lab level. Postdocs are just concerned about writing a good diversity statement and honestly don't really understand diversity, which makes them gullible to some very articulate white man. Fun fact - MCB has too many male faculty named "David" than black faculties.
- I think that my department has made a good start at trying to actively address issues of DEI, and I think that, as long as they continue the dialogue, hopefully we can work to make this department more inclusive. I think scheduling regular

meetings/training/discussions would be really helpful to continue to work on these issues within our department.

- Wider participation in the lab

Sharing more information/ more sense of a community:

- Yes, at department level, I'd like to at least have been informed what actions have been undertaken
- More concrete actions and communication from higher levels (e.g. university itself, all the departments) regarding the actions.
- I wish there was more of a sense of community across the department so I felt I had some organization to plug into to work on these issues
- I think inclusive programs that are not explicitly labeled "inclusive" do a better job of actually including people and fostering friendships.

More outreach/volunteering opportunities:

- Do more outreach
- I think the department should do a better job of promoting the PhD programs at underserved, undergraduate focused colleges
- I think incorporating mentorship and volunteering opportunities as a regular part of lab culture and expectations (just as we do regular safety trainings) should be done department and campus wide

Faculty evaluation:

- I believe that faculty should be required to fully evaluate their complicity in perpetuating systemic racism in our institutions. They do so when they tout 'meritocratic' hiring and selection processes for people in their labs. There is ample evidence that definitions of 'merit' vary from person to person, and also that the idea of finding the 'best person for the job' is laden with implicit biases.

Focus on mentoring:

- Creating a DEI group to a) organize regular gatherings to build community focused on DEI initiatives and community, and b) to set up informal mentor/mentee relationships with a particular focus on DEI and culturally mindful mentoring, c) provide training for issues focused on DEI and culturally mindful mentoring.
- I think incorporating mentorship and volunteering opportunities as a regular part of lab culture and expectations (just as we do regular safety trainings) should be done department and campus wide

Survey to identify "who we are":

- A survey of who is currently in the department followed by sharing of this data to highlight who we are and identify ways in which we can increase diversity.

More self-reflection and acknowledgement of events:

- As a member of the department's DEI committee, I have found that significant self-reflection and learning is necessary for many individuals and that it's been difficult to

have productive conversations with faculty in particular who are not doing the work to reflect and educate at an individual and cohort level. As many of the junior members are actively doing this work on a daily basis, we end up carrying the committee forward but our potential to make more progress is stifled by this setback.

- At the department level, it didn't really seem like there was much acknowledgement of what was going on over the summer

DEI newsletter:

- Receiving a newsletter (or weekly reminder/update) of upcoming campus and departmental DEI-related events would be helpful.

2. BETTER HIRING PRACTICES:

- More concrete efforts to have more diversity hiring/admissions at all levels
- I think having more postdoc involvement in the faculty search process in the department as it pertains to DEI efforts could be effective. Having postdocs meet with faculty candidates to discuss their DEI plans could prepare the next generation of faculty members to engage in dialogue on actions to improve our STEM communities from within.
- Changing hiring practices
- I'd like to see new recruiting methods for post-docs, techs, and undergrads- actually post job openings rather than waiting for a cold email!
- Hiring, diversity grants
- I hope they value diversity when admitting new grad students/hiring new faculty
- The ESPM department worked very hard to take a first major step towards instituting DEI programs (course offerings, seminar series, lab efforts, etc) while acknowledging that they have been complicit in the past and more is to be done in the future. I think they are a leader in this regard and I commend them (and the faculty sponsor Stephanie Carlson) for their dedicated efforts over the summer to address concerns about centering whiteness in the dept. I think that the next steps are to hire faculty from BIPOC backgrounds and to create more equitable, inclusive spaces in the dept and individual labs. This type of representation is severely lacking in ecology/environmental sciences (though I believe that the ESPM dept was already doing a better job than other universities with similar programs). I'm hopeful that the dedicated faculty, staff, and students will be able to make major progress and that they are truly committed to it in the long-term.
- More concrete plans around hiring, etc in order to improve DEI goals
- Instituting quotas for new hires for diversification of new faculty and graduate students
- Have trainees' letters required for tenure package

3. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE:

- The amount of racist and homophobic remarks I heard & overheard (and also suffered from personally) during my time in MCB is unprecedented for me. People in my lab have used racial and homophobic slurs, whether in the presence or absence of other trainees. This was brought up to supervisors, and a couple of university representatives by multiple people, but was either dismissed or not handled to mitigate the problem. It

seems like the main response is to sweep things under the rug. It is unreasonable to expect that trainees will complain to title IX officers or other faculty members when they are in the midst of their career. I have personally suffered from repercussions after a complaint, both personally and professionally, when I brought up issues in my lab to my supervisors. I learned (the hard way) that if I want to survive this system I will simply need to stay quiet.

- I feel there are people who want to bring change but also there is a fear behind it. If everyone will be equal then will junior respect seniors or faculty. I think policy makers should work on their actions and actual targets first before we see any change.

Initiatives sorted according to the Department and Lab.

From the answer to: (Optional) Which department or school are you in?
(Optional) Which lab are you in?

Department:

Astronomy

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)

Bioengineering

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department
- Departmental town halls
- Other: DEI efforts have been focused in the graduate program (which I still receive emails from, but other postdocs may not).

CEE

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Departmental town halls

Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Departmental town halls

Chemistry

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Offered classes and events with invited speakers
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department
- Designated specific departmental DEI programs

- Departmental town halls
- Supported specific DEI programs

Earth and Planetary sciences

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Offered classes and events with invited speakers
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department

EECS + IEOR

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)

EPS

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)

ESPM

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Offered classes and events with invited speakers
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department
- Designated specific departmental DEI programs
- Other: the department seminar series now requires >50% speakers to be from URM backgrounds
- Other: I'm not 100% sure as post docs aren't really folded into the broader department community

Geography

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department
- Designated specific departmental DEI programs

IB

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department
- Designated specific departmental DEI programs
- Supported specific DEI programs
- Departmental town halls

Innovative Genomics Institute

- Other: A ground up committee was formed (not top down from the department leadership) and we meet regularly to formulate a DEI plan and goals which we will bring to leadership. They appear supportive at this time, but there has yet to be concrete support yet.

MCB

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Offered classes and events with invited speakers
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department
- Designated specific departmental DEI programs
- Departmental town halls
- Supported specific DEI programs
- Other: I am aware of actions being taken by and for graduate students in MCB
- Other: there is a lot of talk about DEI but this doesn't translate to anything.
- Other: many of the above are in the works but not yet started.

Optometry and Vision Science

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department
- Designated specific departmental DEI programs
- Departmental town halls

Physics

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Offered classes and events with invited speakers,
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department
- Designated specific departmental DEI programs
- Departmental town halls
- Supported specific DEI programs

Plant and Microbial Biology

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department
- Designated specific departmental DEI programs

QB3

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Departmental town halls
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Departmental town halls

Space Sciences Lab

- Other: None of these...we talked about it once.

STAT

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the department
- Designated specific departmental DEI programs

Lab:

Barton:

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the lab
- Supported specific DEI programs

Battles Lab:

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)

Bowles Lab:

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the lab
- Supported specific DEI programs

Chris Chang lab:

- Supported specific DEI programs

Drubin/Barnes:

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the lab

Heald:

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the lab

Human Evolution Research Center (HERC)

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)

Koskella lab:

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Other: we added a DEI part to the lab website with list of actions and we included DEI discussions once a month in the lab meetings, also with the idea to keep the lab page up to date.

Martin Lab:

- Organised regular meetings (e.g. weekly/monthly)
- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)

- Supported specific DEI programs

Shapira:

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)

Sudmant Lab:

- Shared material (e.g. readings, websites)
- Designated specific figures (e.g. inclusion leaders) in the lab
- Supported specific DEI programs

Caveat: the survey was sent to all the UC Berkeley postdocs by the Visiting Scholars and Postdoctoral Association (VSPA). Since we wanted to guarantee anonymity, we did not require any form of identification. This implies that we might have some non-postdoc replies and potential double entries.