

Action Items for the MIT Biology Community to Implement

These actions were generated during a community-wide discussion on how to combat racism in STEM and how to improve the MIT Biology department and broader community with respect to these and other related issues. This list is not a comprehensive source of actions each member of the Biology community can take, but rather, it serves as a resource and sign of commitment from staff, graduate students, postdocs, and faculty members to work on and improve diversity, equity, and inclusion at MIT. A collaborative document for community members to contribute more and elaborate on suggestions can be found [here](#).

Training/Mentoring

As a *community*,

- There is a necessity for a trained, third party individual to facilitate responses to harassment of students as well as to implement training for all members of the Biology community.

As a *faculty member*,

- Commit to and complete further training in implicit bias, harassment, anti-racism, mentorship skills and other relevant topics to promote diverse and inclusive spaces in labs and classrooms.

As a *postdoc*,

- Organize efforts in the Postdoctoral Association to gather and share resources, devise an annual review, and create a program to help others with grad school applications/grant applications/letters of recommendation.
- Mentor BIPOC/URM in and outside the lab setting at both graduate and undergraduate levels and advocate for and improve training to do so effectively.

As a *graduate student*,

- Devise and implement a history of science/DEI curriculum.
 - Include as part of already-required courses or develop a new semester/IAP course taught by students.
- Travel to conferences focused on DEI, which can be supported through use of the departmental stipend.

As a *staff member*,

- Creation of a committee aimed at writing articles and sharing resources.
- Develop a staff/student mentorship program.

Inclusive Practices

As a *community*,

- Be more inclusive of staff, postdocs, undergraduates, and younger graduate students who have not established connections in the department or who are typically left out.
- Attend events and curate a sense of community by actively promoting involvement.

As a *faculty member*,

- Increase the diversity of the speakers at the colloquium series.
 - Compile and share lists of URM faculty or institutions for consideration.

- Create additional seminar series for early career scientists, particularly URM scientists, to have more opportunities to advance in academia.

As a *postdoc*,

- Utilize involvement in seminar series to advocate for more diverse speakers.

As a *graduate student*,

- Continue/become involved in student group advocacy and encourage participation from other classmates and community members.
- Implement regular lab and class meetings focused on DEI.
 - Establish joint journal clubs or group meetings with labs outside MIT in similar areas of research.

As a *staff member*,

- Order lab and other materials from businesses of color.

Hiring/Recruitment Policies

As a *community*,

- Staff and postdoc onboarding does not always include addition to relevant departmental and group email lists. The onboarding process should be changed to include these members of our community.

As a *faculty member*,

- Make the faculty search committees more transparent and place a higher emphasis on recruitment of BIPOC faculty.
- Seek more feedback about applicants and recruitment from current graduate students.
- Involve more members of the community in organization as well.

As a *postdoc*,

- Become more active in recruitment of and interviewing new hires to encourage DEI and emphasize accountability.
- Search HBCUs, large Southern state schools, and community colleges for a diverse set of applicants.
- Standardize postdoc and staff interviews so that implicit bias cannot be used against applicants during hiring.

As a *staff member*,

- Advertise staff positions in communities of color.

Outreach

As a *community*,

- Donate/share/direct unused lab resources and reagents to labs outside MIT in the Boston/Cambridge community, particularly underfunded schools.

As a *faculty member*,

- Host a Community Science Day for local middle and high school students at MIT
 - Host Bring Lab to the Community events where we take lab materials and resources to under-resourced communities and bring the Science Day to them.

As a *postdoc*,

- Mentor BIPOC/URM outside the lab setting (graduate and undergraduate levels).
- Advocate for and improve training to do so.

As a *grad student*,

- Engage with existing outreach programs and develop new interactive programs with the surrounding BIPOC community.

As a *staff member*,

- Outreach to local communities including college-aged students, but also younger students.

Transparent Reporting

As a *community*,

- There is a strong desire and need for more transparency about application, admission, and matriculation into the department at the graduate level, but also for more and complete data about BIPOC/URMs entering the department at all levels and rates of retention. A separate departmental meeting on this topic to continue this conversation would be appreciated.

As a *faculty member*,

- Implement a feedback system for oneself and trainees for personal growth and accountability.
- Consistently report and improve upon hiring practices for trainees and staff as well as during recruitment and hiring of new faculty members.

As a *staff member*,

- Implement a feedback system for personal growth and accountability.