

Eight Deliberate Steps AGU is Taking to Address Racism in our Community

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The killing of George Floyd has cast a harsh light on systemic racism and the deep harm it has inflicted across our global society for centuries. This harm extends to the scientific endeavor, as expressed by many voices in [#blackintheivory](#) and [#blackinivory](#). A recent “[No Time for Silence Petition](#)” calls on scientific societies to take a lead in addressing racism within their communities. As AGU leaders, we understand that now is the time to double down on our efforts to create an inclusive and equitable community for all across the Earth and space sciences. As such, we have formulated a set of deliberate steps that are planned for the weeks and months ahead. These steps, supported by leaders across AGU’s Board, Council, and Committees, build on our newly updated [AGU Strategic Plan](#) and our existing [AGU Diversity and Inclusion \(D&I\) Strategic Plan](#). They are the first of what we consider a long journey and dedicated effort to address diversity, equity, and inclusion in partnership with scientific societies, institutions, and others around the globe.

1. Expand Funding for AGU’s D&I efforts

We will ensure that AGU’s robust D&I plan is appropriately resourced by prioritizing the funding needed to implement the new strategic goal of promoting and exemplifying an inclusive scientific culture. The recommendation for funding will be included in the 2021 budget and presented to the AGU Board of Directors in Fall 2020 for approval. We are prepared to **invest over the long term to make a lasting impact.**

2. Diversify AGU’s Governance and Committees

Because we are committed to the diversity of AGU’s governance at all levels, we will work with the D&I Advisory Committee and AGU senior staff to develop a holistic plan to **diversify all volunteer positions**. AGU’s Leadership Development/Governance Committee has already applied the lessons from *No Time for Silence* and developed a diverse slate for AGU’s 2021-2022 Board and at-large Council members. This slate is available at agu.org/elections. AGU will expand its ongoing education on diversity, equity, and inclusion topics, including those focused on race and racism in STEM, for all AGU elected leaders and committee members.

3. Enable, Recognize, and Reward Diversity in our Honors

We pledge to honor, recognize, and reward what we value. We will ask the Honors and Awards Committee to redouble their efforts to identify and implement changes needed to secure more diverse nominations and awardees. We will also ask the committee to recognize diversity and inclusion efforts as criteria for current honors and expand the categories in which awards are offered. Our overarching goal is to ensure that the entire **honors process is more transparent and equitable**.

4. Create Truly Diverse Meetings

We will ensure that awareness of **diversity is woven into the fabric of all AGU meetings**. The shift to a virtual Fall Meeting in 2020 opens the door for increased participation from a broader, more diverse community across the globe. We will be working with the D&I Advisory Committee and the Fall Meeting Programming Committee to highlight racism, diversity and inclusion in several plenary sessions and we will encourage session conveners to include discussions of diversity in their programs. We will encourage speakers of invited talks to reflect on their commitment to diversity and inclusion as part of their lectures, allowing us to inspire our community moving forward.

5. Review diversity, equity and inclusion across AGU's Publications

Building on our strong record of data-driven efforts, AGU will conduct an **audit to identify inherent biases in the review, publication, and citation processes**. AGU has recently joined with other publishers to share findings of such audits and data, and to improve practices across scholarly publications from submission to citation. To work toward the elimination of these biases, we will ask the D&I Advisory Committee to collaborate with the Publications Committee.

6. Support the Success of Emerging Underrepresented Scientists

We aim to **more strongly focus on the inclusion of students and early career scientists of color** in our thriving AGU mentoring programs. We plan to expand partnerships with racial and ethnic STEM affinity groups so that we can expand the pool of mentors and mentees from underrepresented groups. As a further step we will link high school programs, minority serving institutions and historically black colleges to research institutions, and AGU community science programs such as the Thriving Earth Exchange and Voices for Science.

7. Advocate for Policies that Eliminate Racial Injustice

The new AGU strategic plan includes a goal of broadening the intellectual footprint of AGU science by supporting, recognizing and rewarding discovery *and* solution-based science. Because environmental degradation, climate change and public health crises are known to disproportionately impact

Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities, this new emphasis gives AGU an opportunity to **address and call out the role of racism** in effecting these damaging impacts. We plan to amplify this AGU goal by strongly advocating for policies that address these inequalities, and by providing our scientists with additional education and training on how they can proactively partner with communities to help mitigate these disparate impacts.

8. Partner with Leaders across STEM to Remove Systemic Racism and Foster Culture Change

We will convene discussions on racism in government research labs, academic departments and commercial settings where Earth and space scientists work. Toward this end, we will work in partnership with other ESS organizations, particularly other scientific societies, to **facilitate conversations on confronting racism in STEM and fostering culture change** with deans, department chairs, institute leaders and the next generation of leaders in diversity, equity and inclusion.

For additional context on these eight steps, please refer to the [13 August 2020 From the Prow post](#).