

## **Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Research and Innovation**

### **Vision and Goals:**

The Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation (OVPRI) fosters a diverse, equitable, and inclusive research environment in which faculty, students, and staff have the resources and opportunities to achieve their goals. Accessibility is and must be an essential component of diversity, equity, and inclusion. By facilitating the success of faculty and research trainees, with a specific focus on removing barriers faced by individuals from underrepresented and minoritized groups, we will advance our research mission and contribute to the diversification of the research community at UO and the research workforce nationally.

We act upon the belief that diverse, equitable, and inclusive research environments are fair and just, and are necessary to accelerate discovery and innovation. As such, we must recruit and retain faculty, students, and staff from diverse backgrounds and abilities, and empower our community to achieve excellence in research and innovation through equitable access to resources, mentorship, and leadership opportunities.

To achieve these goals, we will work to create a robust foundation to foster an inclusive climate; recognize efforts among our researchers to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion; strive to broaden the accessibility of our facilities and research efforts; and track our progress toward achieving our vision. We will work across all units and positions in the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation to attain these aspirational, but achievable, goals. To do so, we will strengthen our organizational culture of accountability, equity, and transparency, as well as redefine our measures of success in staff performance—all of which are outlined in our [Diversity Action Plan](#).

By strategically addressing the four objectives outlined below, while holding ourselves accountable to the University of Oregon community by tracking and reporting our outcomes on an annual basis, we will contribute in meaningful and sustainable ways to advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility both within our community and in the national research and innovation landscape.<sup>1</sup> We will annually engage in a review of our performance to share key metrics and progress to milestones the research community.

### **Objective 1: Increase representation and research success among faculty and research trainees from underrepresented backgrounds to grow a diverse and inclusive research enterprise.**

Strategy A: Increase research success for faculty from underrepresented backgrounds—including women, minoritized faculty, and faculty with disabilities.

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<sup>1</sup> This document was drafted by the OVPRI executive team. Feedback was requested from representatives from the Division of Equity and Inclusion at multiple stages of the process. The Research Advisory Board was also asked for input on this plan. Finally, relevant sections of this strategic plan were discussed OVPRI unit directors and key partners with respect to specific activities and assessments. These partners include Undergraduate Education and Student Services (UESS), Division of Equity & Inclusion (DEI), Data Science Initiative (DSI), College of Arts & Sciences (CAS), Knight Campus, and Advancement, Office of the Provost, Division of Graduate Studies, and Institutional Research.

*Rationale: Empowering and enabling our faculty and research trainees to achieve success in their research endeavors is central to our mission as an R1 research institution. We plan to support and promote research excellence across a broad and diverse research portfolio and among faculty and trainees at all stages of training and careers. Researchers from historically underrepresented backgrounds face significant institutional and systemic barriers to achieving research success. By providing support to faculty underrepresented in research and in positions of leadership in the research enterprise, we can enhance diversity in historically underserved areas of the academy.*

Activities:

*Established and Underway:*

- Expand proposal development capacity and grant support across all university units by providing individualized support to faculty (via Research Development Services) for the identification of funding mechanisms, as well as proposal planning, organizing, and writing.
- Identify and support faculty well-positioned for success (e.g., those with national recognition; key society/professional awards, and service; those from groups historically underrepresented in their fields) in seeking major honorific awards.
- Create inclusive, equitable, and robust procedures for identifying candidates for limited submission programs, in collaboration with Foundation Relations, when applicable.
- Promote funding opportunities relating to diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

*Planned for this year:*

- Highlight honors, awards, and research accomplishments, with emphasis on achievements in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion, in collaboration with University Communications.
- Plan and implement a new Women in Research Seminar Series to discuss opportunities to advance research engagement for women scholars.

*Planned for AY2022-2023:*

- Establish a cohort-based early-career faculty training program for faculty pursuing external grants to provide additional support and resources to increase the likelihood of funding success.
- Establish a data-tracking mechanism to monitor and assess sponsored project funding by faculty based on key demographics to identify potential disparities and design interventions or programming to address challenges or areas of need.

Strategy B: Increase research success for trainees, including undergraduate students, graduate students, and postdoctoral scholars.

*Rationale: Supporting the success of our research trainees, particularly those from underrepresented backgrounds, achieves a myriad of goals. We have a responsibility as a public research institution to provide high-quality and high-impact training for our students and postdoctoral scholars. Their productivity influences the success of their mentors, and their long-term success influences our ability to continue to recruit top candidates from diverse backgrounds. Overall, this work contributes to the diversification of our nation's workforce.*

*Research indicates that women and minoritized students and researchers are less likely to publish and be awarded funding, making them historically less competitive for postdoctoral positions. Consequently,*

*we need to be intentional about enabling success of these potentially vulnerable trainees. In addition, there is a wealth of research indicating that exposure to research bolsters persistence in undergraduate STEM disciplines, particularly for minoritized students. Increasing access to research for undergraduate students, particularly those from marginalized groups, should bolster retention and graduation rates. We plan to develop and implement retention and support strategies to enable success at every step of training to achieve our institutional and national goals of broadening participation in research.*

**Activities:**

*Established and underway:*

- Develop and execute a philanthropy plan to support undergraduate engagement in research.
- Implement processes to increase the number of faculty applying to and being awarded NIH diversity supplements and NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) supplements to support for diverse graduate and undergraduate students.
- Identify and support faculty in submission of institutional research training grants that create new infrastructure to increase the number of diverse students participating in research.

*Planned for this year:*

- Convene working group in partnership with Undergraduate Education and Student Services (UESS), Division of Equity & Inclusion (DEI), Data Science Initiative (DSI), College of Arts & Sciences (CAS), Knight Campus, and Advancement to identify pathways to expand opportunities for undergraduate training in research.
- Highlight honors, awards, and research accomplishments in university communications.
- Develop competitive proposals for external funding to launch new research training programs focused on broadening participation and enhancing major success outcomes (e.g., retention, time to degree completion, job placement) for trainees from underrepresented backgrounds. OVPRI is directly supporting three NIH R25 Research Education proposals designed to increase representation and success for trainees from disadvantaged and underrepresented backgrounds: 1) genomics training, 2) neuroscience training, and 3) postbaccalaureate training in life sciences.

*Planned for AY2022-2023:*

- Collaborate with Division of Graduate Studies, Office of the Provost, and Institutional Research to develop mechanism for tracking admissions factors related to disadvantaged backgrounds to better identify eligible candidates for diversity supplements and fellowships.
- Provide campus-wide training and mentorships specific to the NSF Graduate Research Fellowships Program in coordination with the Division of Graduate Studies and Department of Chemistry.

Strategy C: Advance responsive research on diversity, equity, and inclusion in research and innovation.

*Rationale: Our research community is well-positioned to undertake new research endeavors to contribute to current knowledge on diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility in higher education. Supporting faculty in contributing to this critical research will help us identify gaps and barriers to be addressed at our institution and others through dissemination of data and lessons learned. As many*

*faculty who are ideally suited to lead this research are likely to be either overcommitted or disproportionately overburdened in service activities, we must recognize and reward efforts to advance our knowledge of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Building and showcasing efforts in these areas align with our institutional values and the [IDEAL framework](#).*

Activities:

*Established and underway:*

- Partner with faculty and administrators to seed new collaborations with minority-serving institutions, with the goal of supporting submission of center proposals to NSF and NIH.
- Submit an NSF Alliances for Graduate Education and the Professoriate (AGEP) award focused on the shifting workplace climate to diversify STEM faculty.

*Planned for this year:*

- Create an honorific award to recognize faculty who have advanced diversity, equity, and inclusion in their research and innovation efforts on campus.

*Planned for AY2022-2023:*

- Develop proposals for new mechanisms to support faculty to conduct research that advances knowledge on diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility as it relates to the University of Oregon.

Strategy D: Use baseline demographics of the research community to develop a framework to ensure equitable access to service opportunities and to track and measure the efficacy of new programming.

*Rationale: Although we have access to data through institutional research, we plan to capture demographics of subgroups within specific research activities to identify opportunities where intervention is needed. Greater understanding of demographics will advance representation or inform decision-making to avoid over-burdening our underrepresented researchers in specific service obligations. Tracking engagement in major research office functions that impact access to resources and leadership opportunities should inform practices to increase representation and success among researchers from underrepresented groups.*

Activities:

*Planned for this year:*

- Send optional demographic survey to all faculty participants for OVPRI service (committees, limited submission reviews, etc.).
- Integrate optional demographic survey into internal awards and honors programs to ensure our processes for soliciting proposals and nominations, and making funded decisions, are inclusive and equitable.
- Diversify OVPRI service committees (particularly those of highest impact, such as the Research Advisory Board and internal award review committees), while being mindful of the excess service burden faced by minoritized faculty. We recognize the need to ensure service is spread equitably.
- Compare committee membership to research community demographics to assess equitable access to high impact activities and programming

**Objective 2: Build and sustain an inclusive climate and a culture of continuous improvement and growth in advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion across the research enterprise.**

Strategy: Create new staff-led capacity to develop and integrate DEI initiatives across all aspects of our research work culture and advise leadership on opportunities to continually improve and strengthen inclusive practices.

*Rationale: Fostering an inclusive, diverse environment among our staff, particularly those responsible for supporting our researchers (i.e., research administrative units, research core facilities, executive assistant teams), is critical to both achieve our ambitious DEI goals and advance our research mission. Facilitating staff leadership in this space empowers our team members to identify challenges and implement creative solutions, while also providing important professional development opportunities. OVPRI's leadership to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion comes from across all units and position levels.*

Activities:

*Established and underway:*

- Convene new staff-led Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.
- Develop and execute new Diversity Action Plan focused specifically on OVPRI staff.

*Planned for this year:*

- Implement action items as outlined in the Diversity Action Plan.

**Objective 3: Broaden participation in innovation and entrepreneurship engagement across the university.**

Strategy: Develop inclusive culture of innovation and entrepreneurship that engages research trainees and faculty from diverse fields and backgrounds.

*Rationale: Central to our mission as a public research institution is the transformation of our researchers' knowledge and discoveries into societal impact. Our work to translate research to innovation contributes in significant ways to our local, regional, and national economies through the dissemination of new solutions and development of new commercial ventures. We aim to build on our institutional strengths in this work by broadening participation in innovation activities and entrepreneurial ventures among faculty and research trainees from underrepresented backgrounds, as well as fields like the humanities and social sciences.*

Activities:

*Established and underway:*

- Launch new Women's Innovation Network in partnership with Onward Eugene.
- Launch Mentor Network to provide workshops, trainings, and one-on-one mentoring to support commercialization of research innovation.

*Planned for this year:*

- Work with Advancement and Innovation Council to create seed funding programs through donors who are passionate about diversity, equity, and inclusion and entrepreneurship and innovation.

- Work with Onward Eugene, Young Professionals, and other community-based organizations to increase connections with underrepresented communities in the Eugene-Springfield area through the development of diversity, equity, and inclusion programming.
- Coordinate with Knight Campus leadership to foster a culture of innovation and entrepreneurship under their diversity, equity, and inclusion program.
- Encourage and equip underrepresented groups to participate in industry collaboration (research, services, and consulting).
- In collaboration with UO libraries and other UO stakeholders, IPS is training researchers to utilize a new internal program, “*Echelon: PI*”, designed to support information asset management and protect the creative works of participants. For example, the Just Futures Initiatives is an open research program that seeks to protect underrepresented cultures and their rights. Echelon is designed to engage innovators early in the process so their participation in research does not jeopardize the rights to their works and innovation or to the communities they are working with and their cultural differences and norms.
- Integrate optional demographic survey into IPS Innovation Portal to establish baseline metrics for engagement of faculty from underrepresented backgrounds and track over time.

**Objective 4: Support robust, resilient research infrastructure that has diverse talent and constituents with equitable access to resources.**

Strategy A: Ensure equitable access to equipment and services within the research community.

*Rationale: Research core facilities (RCFs) provide vital research equipment, support, and services necessary to advance research across our institution. Through inclusive leadership, we can provide equitable and accessible use of these unique resources while also continuously improving operations and meeting necessary financial objectives.*

Activities:

*Planned for this year:*

- Develop list of strategies to help ensure equitable access based on input from research core facility directors and managers and faculty advisory committees.
- Ensure that students are among those trained to use the equipment, particularly those who come from educational backgrounds where access to lab equipment was minimal.

Strategy B: Facilitate inclusive leadership development among core facility managers, directors, and users.

*Rationale: We plan to proactively engage core facility users, staff, and leadership in core facility management and planning, which enables growth and development of a more diverse pool of future leaders, while also enabling inclusive succession planning.*

Activities:

*Established and underway:*

- Develop list of strategies to help ensure equitable access based on input from RCF directors and managers and faculty advisory committees.
- Ensure that students are among those trained to use the equipment, particularly those who come from educational backgrounds where access to lab equipment was minimal.

*Planned for this year:*

- Build a curated list of professional development opportunities to share with core facility staff and users to promote leadership skills.
- Create new strategies to proactively engage underrepresented faculty in applying for instrumentation programs.