

The Committee on Diversity and Inclusion

The Department of Physics and Astronomy, Johns Hopkins University

As members of the Department of Physics and Astronomy, we are committed to foster an inclusive environment for all. This is a necessary condition to improve the well-being of students and employees so that they can realize their full potential. The moral obligation to strive for and sustain such an environment is also integral to the basic objectives of scientific inquiries. Scientific progress and revolutions are best achieved through diversity in ideas and novelty in methods. This requires having a diverse and varied set of practitioners from many different backgrounds from the US and international communities.

The role of the Committee for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) is to provide an honest assessment of the current climate of the department for matters affecting diversity and inclusion, identify key issues to address, propose an action plan to create a more equitable environment, and continually seek ways for us to improve. The CDI should strive to be proactive rather than reactive.

To fulfill its mission, the CDI needs to operate with full transparency. Thus, while the CDI can receive general expressions of concern, it is not a confidential body and cannot be used to receive or resolve specific grievances. If requests to bring grievances involving diversity and inclusion are brought to the CDI, its members should direct the complainant to the department chair or to the existing protocols within the department, the school, and the university.

The CDI is composed of three faculty members, one undergraduate student, two graduate students, one postdoc, one research scientist, and one staff member, who meet every other week during the Fall and Spring academic terms. The CDI will include the departmental HR Generalist as an ex-officio member and will report to the Department Chair. The members will be selected annually from a pool of volunteers. The faculty members will be appointed by the Chair. For the other members, anonymous elections of their constituents will be held by the presidents of the SPS (undergraduates) and of PAGs (graduate students), the PAPRS coordinators (postdocs and Research Scientists), and the Department Administrator (staff).

The specific goals of the CDI are to:

- Create an environment that fosters a sense of belonging for all, no matter their race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, nationality, or religion
- Help the department to recruit more under-represented minorities (URM) and women as faculty, staff, students, postdocs, and research scientists
- Provide means of academic and personal support to ensure retention of department members at all levels
- Provide the means and tools for the recognition of implicit bias to all department members
- Keep the Department Chair informed as issues are identified that require further action

The CDI aims to work towards the achievement of these goals and to propose a coherent and concrete plan of assessment and actions:

- Assessment

- o Create and conduct a survey on inclusivity and diversity in the department

- o Create an end-of-year report, which will be publicly available on the website and which includes detailed information on the work of the diversity committee and up-to-date records of departmental demographics

- o Request periodic updates from the department chair, Ombuds office, and OIE regarding concerns or issues within our department that relate to diversity and inclusion

- Plan ongoing activities

- o Work with the Dean's office to identify best practices for recruitment of URM undergraduate and graduate students; organize meetings of the committee and wider department meetings with experts on diversity and inclusion

- o Help to support and further develop the summer internship program to bring talented undergraduate students into the department (the Henry A. Rowland Summer Research Fellowships)

- o Organize periodic discussions with specific groups (student, postdoc and research scientist, staff) to address issues pertaining to inclusivity, equity, and transparency

- o Promote and support the invitation of URMs in department seminars and colloquia

- o Host an annual speaker to focus on issues related to inclusion and diversity