



Division of Polymer Chemistry (POLY)
Andrea M. Kasko, Chair

January 15th, 2021

Diversity, Inclusion, & Respect Advisory Board
The American Chemical Society

Dear Members of the Diversity, Inclusion, and Respect Advisory Board,

This past year, 2020, marked the 100th anniversary of the advent of polymer science. As the ACS division of polymer chemistry (POLY) celebrates a century of scientific achievements in macromolecular chemistry, we must also reflect on the past, present, and future of polymer science, not only in terms of innovation and research, but in the diverse array of polymer scientists that have been, and continue to be, essential to our function within the community and critical to foster scientific innovation from multiple viewpoints.

ACS POLY endeavors to understand efforts within the Society that address diversity, inclusion, and respect (DIR) with regards to programming at national meetings, awards, and workshops -- particularly forming and implementing an action plan to improve division programming efforts moving forward. While input and feedback from our membership, particularly members of underrepresented groups, is critical, we are also aware that minority groups within science are often disproportionately burdened with developing and implementing change. For this reason, we are seeking guidance from this advisory board with regards to best practices and resources to use data-driven and analytical approaches to benchmark current DIR efforts within POLY and set appropriate success metrics to determine if changes to division programming are effective and how they need to be modified to be more inclusionary of all members of our community. Furthermore, we want to be respectful of our membership and ensure that any data collection efforts to understand where we are consider privacy issues, intersectionality, but still reflect the individual complexities of a person, as not to reduce our membership to statistics and potentially risk tokenism. Our goal is to support and honor our colleagues and ensure that our programming (including invited speakers, symposium organizers, and awardees) elevates and supports underrepresented people in the sciences.

Thank you for providing resources and links for getting started on the ACS website and through recent editorials, issues, and books on diversity and inclusion within ACS Publications. They are excellent reading and we hope as POLY and ACS overall continues to develop DIR programs and resources, that they will reflect the specific challenges and current needs to improve equity with all members of the Society.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We'd really appreciate your feedback and suggestions on how we can accurately benchmark where POLY is in terms of inclusive programming for our national meetings and to set goals and plans for where we would like POLY to be. We are happy to partner with you, any of the ACS committees working to improve DIR within the Society (CMA, WCC, YCC, SCC, ConC, and others) to appropriately develop programming best practices within our division more inclusive to underrepresented members of the ACS.

Best Regards,

The Executive Committee of ACS Division of Polymer Chemistry