hhmi

HHMI's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Our Commitment

Advancing academic science by creating opportunities for everyone to learn, contribute, and thrive.

For US science, one of today's most pressing challenges is to maximize scientific impact by building a workforce that fully reflects the racial, ethnic, and gender demographics of our increasingly diverse country. To pioneer life-saving medications, transformative technology, and basic knowledge that the whole world needs, we can't afford to leave talent behind. We need everyone.

HHMI can help meet this challenge through our biomedical research and education mission. Our aspirations are not new. For more than 30 years, HHMI has supported talented students from underrepresented backgrounds through our science education programs. More recently, we've expanded our support to postdoctoral researchers and early career faculty. This work continues.

What's new today for HHMI is that we're placing increased emphasis on the experience of science – the equity and inclusion that enables students and scientists from all backgrounds to thrive. We're doing this by taking concrete steps toward more consistent and effective mentorship, community, and professional development. We are expanding our efforts to influence an entire career span in academic science. And we are deepening our commitment to equity and inclusion for our administrative employees.

In 2021, HHMI committed $2 billion to increase racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in science and to foster environments in which everyone can thrive. We believe the continued preeminence of US science depends on us all doing a much better job attracting, educating, mentoring, and advancing people from all backgrounds.

Our Approach

Build a diverse scientific workforce through recruitment, professional development, community, and healthy work environments.

A major focus of HHMI's strategy is to influence academic science at key points along career pathways, from undergraduate to tenured faculty. Today, at every one of these points, we lose diversity that could make science maximally creative and innovative.

HHMI seeks to contribute to change in science by:

- Increasing **diversity** at every career stage from undergraduate student to lab head or independent professional. Diversity is the presence of a variety of characteristics and identities, both visible and invisible, among a group of people. HHMI values diversity across the full spectrum of personal characteristics and identities. HHMI's goals initially focus on racial, ethnic, and gender diversity because certain groups within these categories remain significantly underrepresented in science.

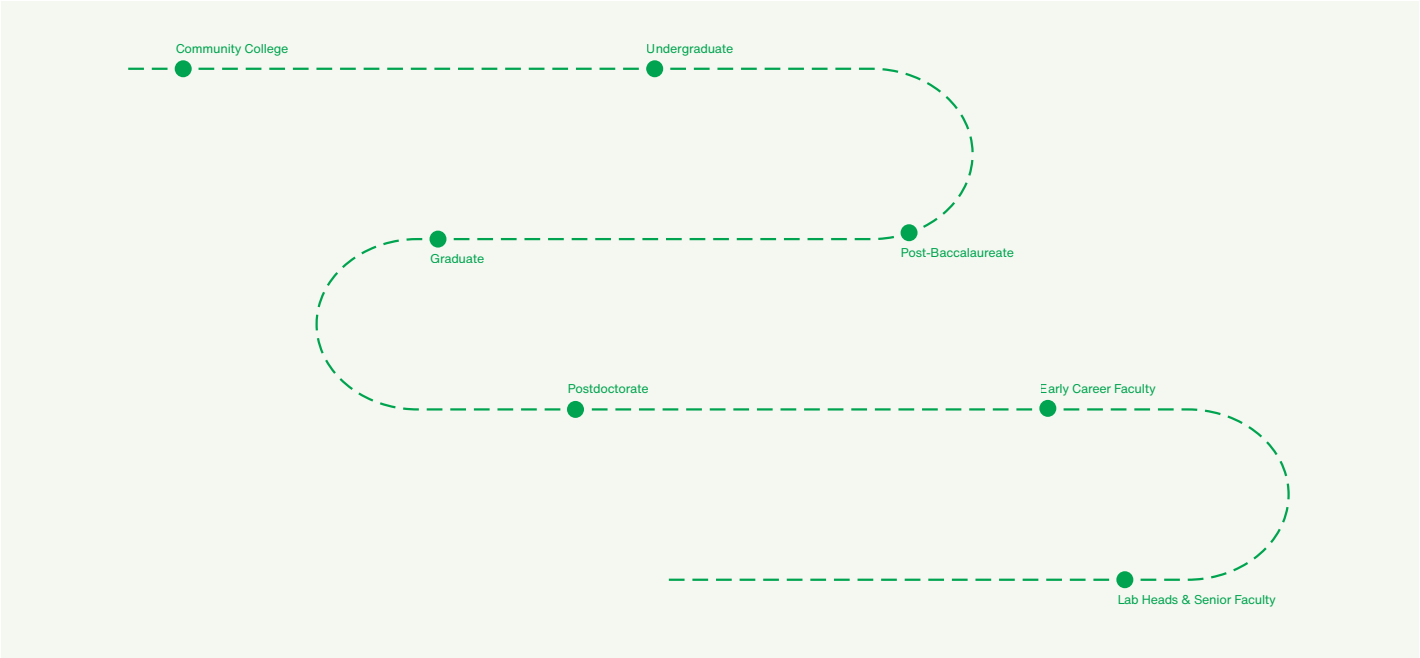
- Working with scientists and grantees to create **inclusive** culture. To be inclusive is to create an environment in which all are inspired to interact through mutual respect, support, and appreciation of difference. An inclusive environment deliberately fosters a culture of safety and trust.

- Placing **equity** at the center of policies and practices in research, classroom, and administrative settings. To center equity is to commit to providing fair treatment and to ensuring that all people have access to opportunities and advancement. Equity also means addressing and correcting systemic barriers that prevent the full participation of all.

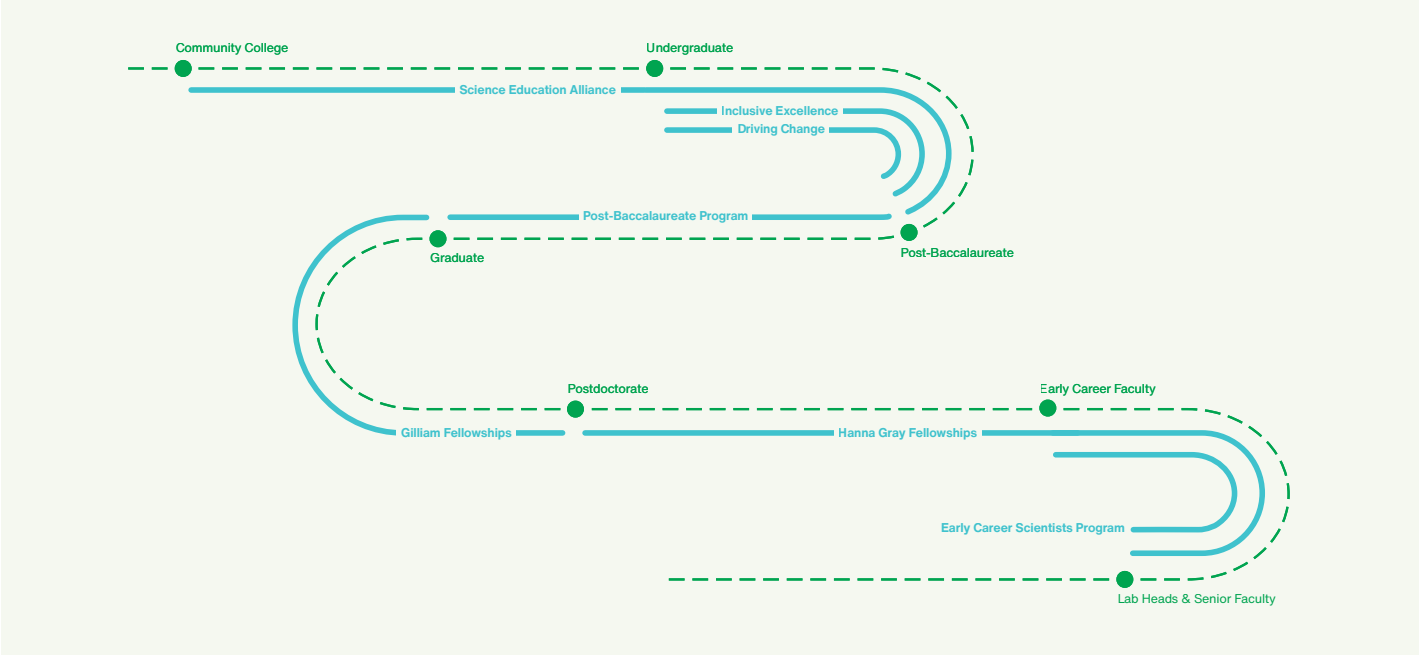
- Holding ourselves **accountable** to ensure responsibility and transparency. While HHMI's leaders ultimately are responsible for achieving our goals, all employees are expected to contribute.

A major focus of our strategy is to influence academic science, where most basic biomedical research – and the teaching and training of future scientists – happens. It is also from academic science that HHMI recruits our scientific leadership, researchers, and students.

Academic Science Pathway



HHMI's DEI Commitment



Our Goals

Concrete steps to influence the experience of science at every career stage.

Community College & Undergraduate

01 **Increase the uniform persistence of all undergraduate students in STEM.**

Post-Baccalaureate & Graduate

02 **Increase the racial and ethnic diversity of STEM PhDs.**

Postdoctorate & Early Career

03 **Support racial and ethnic diversity of biomedical science faculty in the US.**

In HHMI Labs

04 **Increase the diversity of HHMI's scientific population.**

05 **Equip all heads of HHMI labs with effective leadership and mentoring skills.**

All HHMI

06 **Increase the diversity of HHMI leaders and administrative employees.**

07 **Intentionally foster a culture of engagement and trust.**

08 **Prioritize an equitable culture and practices.**

09 **Create a system of accountability and reporting.**

10 **Learn, develop, and share knowledge to ensure impact and sustainable change in science.**

01.

Increase the uniform persistence of all undergraduate students in STEM.

At schools that receive HHMI grants to advance diversity and inclusion at the undergraduate level, increase the persistence in STEM of all students, such that students from racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in science succeed and persist in STEM at the same or higher rates than those who are not underrepresented.

Today, many more students enter college with an interest in STEM than leave with a STEM degree. Students from racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in science leave STEM at twice the rate of majority students. Research shows this loss cannot be simply explained by students' lack of interest or preparation.

To increase the persistence of underrepresented students in STEM, we're focusing on two strategies grounded in evidence: helping faculty create a more inclusive learning environment and providing students an introductory science experience that includes discovery-based research opportunities.

HHMI commits to deepen our investment in the Inclusive Excellence and Driving Change programs, which aim to create more inclusive learning environments at individual colleges and universities and to encourage dissemination of effective practices across institutions. In addition, HHMI will expand the Science Education Alliance program, which offers authentic research experiences for beginning undergraduates.

01.

HHMI will:

- Support an additional 200+ colleges and universities through the Inclusive Excellence program. University and college faculty and administrators will participate in a learning community engaged in a continual process to increase their institution's capacity for inclusion of all students.

- Support 24 research universities through the Driving Change program. Each university will develop institution-centered activities aimed at creating a more inclusive STEM learning environment and student-centered activities to achieve outcomes similar to those of the Meyerhoff program at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

- Add more than 100 colleges and universities – with emphasis on community colleges and minority-serving institutions – to the Science Education Alliance (SEA). The SEA-Phage Hunters Advancing Genomic and Evolutionary Science program engages large numbers of beginning undergraduates in authentic research via a course-based format.

02.

Increase the racial and ethnic diversity of STEM PhDs.

Support 200 bachelor's degree holders through post-baccalaureate training in HHMI research labs, in order to strengthen their preparedness for and commitment to pursuit of a PhD.

Many undergraduates confront life circumstances that affect their competitiveness and preparation for undertaking a PhD. For example, college students who must pay for their own education often need time-consuming jobs, leaving less opportunity for research activity or unpaid internships that enhance preparedness for graduate study. A post-baccalaureate program that includes paid employment can provide college graduates with research experience to prepare them for PhD work and confirm their commitment to a research career.

HHMI commits to establish a new non-degree-granting post-baccalaureate program for promising college graduates who have demonstrated commitment to diversity and inclusion in science. We expect this program to include, but not be limited to, individuals from groups underrepresented in science. Through this program, we aim to provide 200 individuals who hold bachelor's degrees with employment and training in HHMI research labs.

HHMI will:

- Regularly select cohorts of 30-40 college graduates and pair each with an HHMI Investigator or Janelia Group Leader for research experience that lasts up to two years. These lab heads are well positioned to train and mentor students and to encourage them to persist.
- Provide professional development, guidance on applying to graduate school and lab leadership, and regular opportunity for post-baccalaureate students to learn from each other.
- Establish a peer community consisting of post-baccalaureate students, Gilliam Fellows, and Hanna Gray Fellows. Nurture this community to foster a shared sense of belonging, support, and connection among members.

02.

Support 500 PhD students through grants and the development of a community of scholars committed to a culture in which all people feel they belong, in order to better retain scientists from groups underrepresented in STEM.

HHMI commits to directly support 500 PhD students by providing them with financial support, mentorship, and active involvement in the HHMI community and by encouraging activities that promote greater inclusion at their institutions.

To achieve this goal, HHMI will enhance and extend our commitment to the Gilliam Fellows program. Launched in 2004, the Gilliam Fellows program is designed to ensure that populations underrepresented in science are prepared to assume leadership roles, including as college and university faculty, and to foster the development of a healthier, more inclusive academic science ecosystem.

HHMI will:

- Grow the Gilliam Fellows program over the next decade by making 50 new awards annually to graduate student-mentor pairs.
- Engage Gilliam Fellow advisers in a required professional development program to equip them with skills to create and sustain an inclusive lab environment and to serve as culturally aware mentors. Advisers will master skills to remove barriers and to encourage fellows to see themselves as scientists who can contribute meaningfully to their disciplines.
- Provide Fellows with mentors who listen to them, provide tangible support systems, and actively encourage them to stay in science.
- Establish a peer community consisting of Gilliam Fellows, Hanna Gray Fellows, and post-baccalaureate students. Nurture this community to foster a shared sense of belonging, support, and connection among members.
- Build an inclusive and growing HHMI community by involving Gilliam Fellows in HHMI science meetings, events at our Janelia Research Campus, and other activities. Enable scientists at different career stages to meet, learn from, and exchange ideas with each other.

03.

Support racial and ethnic diversity of biomedical science faculty in the US.

Add 200 biomedical science faculty from groups underrepresented in science to US universities and colleges and provide support to their institutions to foster equitable and inclusive environments.

Today, individuals from racial and ethnic groups underrepresented in science make up roughly 14% of biology PhDs but only 7% of tenured and tenure-track biomedical faculty positions. Closing this gap in US medical schools' basic science departments would require the addition of approximately 600 tenure-track faculty members from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups, according to 2016 research published in *eLife* by Kenneth D. Gibbs Jr. and colleagues.

HHMI commits to directly support the addition of 200 faculty members from groups underrepresented in science to US universities and colleges by providing them with financial support, mentoring, and active involvement in the HHMI community and by funding professional development activities that promote greater equity and inclusion at their institutions.

To achieve this goal, HHMI will enhance and extend our commitment to the Hanna H. Gray Fellows Program. Launched in 2017, the Hanna H. Gray Fellows Program aims to recruit and retain individuals from gender, racial, ethnic, and other groups underrepresented in the life sciences, including those individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds. Fellows receive up to eight years of support, beginning during early postdoctoral training and extending through the first several years of a tenure-track faculty position.

03.

HHMI will:

- Select up to 25 Hanna Gray Fellows every year over the next decade.
- Engage Hanna Gray Fellow advisers in a required professional development program to equip them with skills to create and sustain an inclusive lab environment and to serve as culturally aware mentors. In addition, help prepare Hanna Gray Fellows to establish and manage their own labs. Advisers and Fellows will master skills to remove barriers and to encourage students and trainees to see themselves as scientists who can contribute meaningfully to their disciplines.
- Pair Hanna Gray Fellows with HHMI Investigators for career coaching and mentoring. This will provide Fellows with an expert faculty adviser outside their lab and department. Investigators are uniquely positioned to share a broader view and to encourage persistence.
- Establish a peer community consisting of Hanna Gray Fellows, Gilliam Fellows, and post-baccalaureate students. Nurture this community to foster a shared sense of belonging, support, and connection among members.
- Build an inclusive and growing HHMI community by continuing to involve Hanna Gray Fellows in HHMI science meetings, events at our Janelia Research Campus, and other activities. Enable scientists at different career stages to meet, learn from, and exchange ideas with each other.
- Encourage inclusive activity by academic departments that Fellows enter as they begin tenure-track faculty positions. Provide funds that can be used for mentorship training, workshops to foster equitable practices and inclusion, or similar activity that fosters a supportive environment for everyone. All faculty play a critical role in establishing inclusive workplace environments and setting equitable expectations for research, teaching, and service.

03.

Support 125 Early Career Scientists who are independent faculty committed to creating environments in which a broader variety of scientists persist and thrive.

HHMI commits to support 125 Early Career Scientists who are independent faculty doing excellent science, in part by creating environments in which a broader variety of scientists persist and thrive. These scientists will have demonstrated a commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion in science.

HHMI will:

- Establish a new program that will provide salary and research support for independent, early career scientists. Regularly select cohorts of up to 30 Early Career Scientists, each for a five-year term that is renewable once, for a maximum 10 years of support.

- Engage Early Career Scientists in a required professional development program to equip them with skills to create and sustain an inclusive lab environment and to serve as culturally aware mentors. Through training, Early Career Scientists will master skills to remove barriers and to encourage trainees and students to see themselves as scientists who can contribute meaningfully to their disciplines.

- Pair Early Career Scientists with HHMI Investigators for career coaching and mentoring. This will provide each Early Career Scientist with an expert faculty adviser outside their lab and department. Investigators are well positioned to share a broader view and to encourage persistence.

- Build an inclusive and growing HHMI community by involving Early Career Scientists in HHMI science meetings, events at our Janelia Research Campus, and other activities. Enable scientists at different career stages to meet, learn from, and exchange ideas with each other.

- Encourage inclusive activity by academic departments that Fellows enter as they begin tenure-track faculty positions. Provide funds that can be used for mentorship training, workshops to foster equitable practices and inclusion, or similar activity that fosters a supportive environment for everyone. All faculty play a critical role in establishing inclusive workplace environments and setting equitable expectations for research, teaching, and service.

04.

Increase the diversity of HHMI's scientific population.

Increase the diversity of HHMI's advisory boards, Investigator program, Janelia Research Campus lab head population, and our lab-based population to better reflect the racial, ethnic, and gender makeup of the relevant talent pools.

At all levels of science, diversity can maximize creativity, contribute to a healthy culture, and help sustain the public relevance of biomedical research in a nation that is itself increasingly diverse. Achieving these outcomes requires intentional, sustained equity and inclusion in HHMI labs

HHMI will:

- Provide additional resources to advisory reviewers of HHMI Investigators and Janelia Group Leaders on identifying and mitigating unconscious bias.
- Continue diversifying advisory boards to increase racial, ethnic, and gender diversity among reviewers at all stages of open competitions for scientists, students, and institutions.
- Support HHMI lab heads in recruitment best practices and exploration of institutional innovations such as cluster-hiring and prioritizing recruitment of scientists who have demonstrated commitment to mentoring others from underrepresented backgrounds.
- Continue intentionally adapting competition and program practices to meet the needs of our entire community.

05.

Equip all heads of HHMI labs with effective leadership and mentoring skills.

Establish and provide professional development programming in leadership and effective mentorship for all HHMI lab heads and lab members. Evaluate the impact of these programs on lab experiences and environments. Freely extend programs and resources to research labs across the sciences.

The labs of HHMI Investigators and Janelia researchers train scientists who often go on to become faculty at research universities. The experiences that trainees have in HHMI labs today influence how they themselves will educate and train future scientists tomorrow.

HHMI commits to prioritize effective mentorship for all HHMI lab heads and lab members.

HHMI will:

- Establish HHMI in-house expertise in culturally aware mentorship training, in partnership with the Center for the Improvement of Mentored Experiences in Research at the University of Wisconsin. Use HHMI expertise to develop required programming for Gilliam Fellow advisers; Hanna Gray Fellow advisers; Hanna Gray Fellows; HHMI Investigators; Janelia lab heads; and Early Career Scientists. The mentorship training experts will also serve as a resource for our scientists who wish to engage in professional development beyond requirements.

- Work with the National Center for Principled Leadership & Research Ethics at the University of Illinois to develop a professional development program that will be required for all HHMI lab heads and lab members. With a focus on practical application of collaborative skills in the research environment, the course will prepare researchers of all backgrounds and levels of responsibility to work effectively with diverse teams to achieve the highest standards of scientific rigor, reproducibility, inclusion, and integrity. We will evaluate the course through surveys, refresh the content over time, and make the course freely available to academic institutions and the research community.

06.

Increase the diversity of HHMI leaders and administrative employees.

Increase the diversity of HHMI leadership at the Director level and above, as well as our overall administrative employee population, to better reflect the racial, ethnic, and gender makeup of the relevant talent pools.

As in lab and classroom environments, diversity in administrative workspaces can maximize creativity and contribute to a healthy culture for everyone. We're committed to developing and redesigning practices that combine equitable, inclusive approaches with continual learning.

HHMI will:

- Continually review and refine talent acquisition strategy to provide hiring managers with diverse candidate slates at every stage.
- Integrate employees from across the community and across career levels in search committees and interview panels. Provide additional resources to raise awareness of unconscious bias.
- Integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion expectations into job descriptions and annual performance reviews for leadership positions.
- Develop employees, with the goal of having qualified internal candidates able to compete for promotion to leadership and management positions as opportunities become available.
- Equitably support the professional growth of all employees, including regular opportunities for professional development.

07.

Intentionally foster a culture of engagement and trust.

Earn high marks from HHMI employees for the organization's culture, indicating employees feel empowered, engaged, and valued by colleagues, managers, and senior leaders. Earn high marks for employees' sense of belonging and ability to apply their unique skills and perspectives to fulfilling HHMI's mission. Earn high marks for senior leaders and managers for inclusive behaviors.

HHMI commits to intentionally foster a culture of engagement and trust, through evaluation, organizational decisions, dialogue, and learning.

HHMI will:

- Regularly seek employee insights on needs and experiences, to inform decisions about our workplace environments.
- Articulate and recognize inclusive behavior that contributes to HHMI's desired culture.
- Offer learning opportunities designed to equip community members with culturally aware skills and insights.
- Provide opportunities for employees to connect with senior leaders.
- Provide and support employee affinity groups and other community networks that cultivate a sense of belonging.
- Provide easy ways for employees to ask and receive answers to their questions.
- Regularly assess progress through quantitative and qualitative assessment.

08.

Prioritize an equitable culture and practices.

Build HHMI's capacity to sustain our commitment by developing and redesigning foundational human resources practices, with particular focus on equity across race, ethnicity, and gender in talent acquisition; learning and development; mentorship; compensation and total rewards; performance management; and succession planning and exit. Develop feedback loops in order to continually improve practices and their integration into an equitable culture.

Spanning HHMI's lab and administrative environments, our foundational practices, tools, and systems provide the infrastructure necessary to achieve our goals over the long term. We will take concrete steps to define and develop the experiences we want our potential, current, and past HHMI employees to have. This work involves collaboration and integration across key teams in our headquarters, Janelia Research Campus, and field environments.

08.

HHMI will:

- Continually review and refine talent acquisition strategy to provide hiring managers with diverse candidate slates at every stage.
- Continually review and refine performance management process and tools for ease of use and consistency.
- Provide all managers with professional development and educational resources on identifying and mitigating unconscious bias.
- Provide transparency about HHMI's compensation philosophy and how HHMI addresses pay equity.
- Review and revise HHMI program outreach and communications to better attract, represent, and promote racial, ethnic, and gender diversity in science and education.
- Develop formal and informal ways to recognize employees.
- Communicate consistently about development opportunities and enable employees to take advantage of them.
- Create mentorship opportunities for HHMI employees.
- Regularly assess progress through quantitative and qualitative assessment.

09.

Create a system of accountability and reporting.

Develop specific accountability plans for these goals across levels of the organization, using concrete measures and consistent, transparent reporting.

We're working to put our diversity, equity, and inclusion goals into practice in our day-to-day work, based on HHMI's role as an employer and a leader in scientific research and education. We want to live up to our commitment and the expectation that we will be transparent. HHMI's leaders are key to this effort, as are employees across the organization.

HHMI will:

- Charge each HHMI vice president and chief with developing specific diversity, equity, and inclusion goals for their department and working with team members to achieve them.
- Charge each HHMI vice president and chief with regularly reporting progress toward department-specific goals. In turn, this will be used to inform broader HHMI-wide tactics and progress reporting.
- Explicitly incorporate progress toward department-specific goals into the annual performance reviews of each HHMI vice president or chief.
- Building on performance-based approaches for vice presidents and chiefs, establish practices to hold all directors and managers responsible for cultivating inclusive and equitable environments for their teams.
- Share employee demographic data publicly, reporting on changes over time.

10.

Learn, develop, and share knowledge to ensure impact and sustainable change in science.

Collaborate with peer organizations to learn, develop, and broadly share knowledge about increasing diversity, equity, and inclusion in academic and research environments.

By collaborating with other organizations, HHMI can become more effective and influence others. We aim to meaningfully contribute to evidence-based practices to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in science.

HHMI will:

- Collaborate with philanthropies and government funding agencies to share experiences, barriers, solutions, and ideas.
- Collaborate with publishers, academic leaders, funders, and other partners to promote greater equity in academic publishing and evaluation systems.
- Collaborate with institutions to create and freely distribute information about supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion in academic departments.

Our Data

Where HHMI stands today.

As part of HHMI's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, we are evaluating and sharing data about race/ethnicity and gender representation in our employee population. HHMI employs more than 800 people across two campuses: our Maryland headquarters and our Janelia Research Campus in Virginia. We employ 250-300 scientists as HHMI Investigators, and some of their lab members, at roughly 60 colleges, universities, and other host sites. To administratively support those Investigators, we also employ science operations staff located in about a dozen small offices nationwide.

See our latest demographic data at **diversity.hhmi.org.**

About HHMI

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute is a science philanthropy whose mission is to advance basic biomedical research and science education for the benefit of humanity.

Learn more at **hhmi.org/about.**