

Diversity and Inclusion from Research to Post-Publication

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Next, Harrison Inefuku from Iowa State University discussed efforts to examine which voices are excluded from scholarly records. In the face of a large majority of white authors and contributors in the academic realm, he wants to ensure that underrepresented voices of faculty at Iowa State University are heard. To this end, the Iowa State University Digital Press provides a platform for diverse voices.

Racquel Jemison from the American Chemical Society (ACS) then discussed initiatives for filling up the pipeline of science careers—and, by extension, future authors—with underrepresented voices. To achieve this goal, three programs in the Education Division of ACS (Project SEED, the ACS Scholars Program, and the ACS Bridge Project) focus on encouraging high school students to be excited about chemistry, funding college student education and expanding professional networks, and creating more opportunities to attend graduate school. All three programs focus on students from low-income and/or historically underrepresented minority groups.

Next, Kamela Heyward-Rotimi, founder of the Knowledge Exchange Research Group (KERG), emphasized that collaborative knowledge production is the future of equitable publishing and stressed the importance of including West African scholarship in global platforms. As described by Heyward-Rotimi, KERG is “an international research group that explores solutions to the growing crisis of African-descended communities’ and racialized groups’ inequitable access to digital information and knowledge production.” One of KERG’s programs that aims to shrink the digital divide and increase the equitable exchange of academic knowledge is the West African E-Library Collaborative, which is a pilot project exploring improved e-library access, publishing, and digital archives for scholars at West African Universities.

The final panelist in Part 1 was Deborah Poff from the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE), who examined efforts to resolve sources of bias in publishing. She covered three case studies of publications that faced severe backlash after exploring bias. These case studies prompted interesting questions about whether the standards of expertise for authors, peer reviewers, and editors are changing, and whether some subjects are off limits for authors because the subject matter is not a part of their lived experience.

In Part 2, Nancy Roberts from Umbrella Analytics discussed problems with diversity in academic publishing in the United Kingdom, stressing that an abundance of

“It’s not just inclusion; we all need to be a part of the design of the platform.”—Kamela Heyward-Rotimi

In a two-part session titled “Diversity and Inclusion from Research to Post-Publication,” speakers discussed diversity problems inherent to academic publishing. The panelists provided a wealth of perspectives, including topics ranging from high school students considering science degrees through researchers’ access to published material. The sessions highlighted case studies, methods, and goals for increasing diversity across the entire scholarly record.

Erika Valenti kicked off Part 1 with an overview of STRIDE, Emerald Publishing’s LGBTQ and social justice awareness initiative that concentrates on gender, diversity, stereotypes, unconscious bias training, and inclusion. At its core, Emerald Publishing, and STRIDE in particular, focuses on upholding safe spaces, which is seen as a never-ending project. STRIDE adheres to several pillars, including sharing and disseminating content related to LGBTQ and social justice research and scholarship, and expanding their good works plan into the local community.

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What can you do?

1. **Be intentional** when you write role profiles and job advertisements
2. **Have courage** to question authority bias
3. **Reach out** to under-represented groups through outreach, paid internships, trainee programmes

authors and reviewer bases, and expanding the diversity included within them by not defaulting to more convenient pools of candidates.

Racquel Jemison followed up by examining how diversity and inclusion needs to be both a top-down and bottom-up approach. By attending minority advocacy conferences, such as the Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), staff members dedicated to improving diversity and inclusion initiatives can get a sense of how science and culture combine while also meeting potential authors, editors, and employees.

publishing employees are highly educated, poorly paid, and overwhelmingly white. As Roberts stated, “Academia is not representative of society at large.” She encouraged those in academia to consider how many employment roles truly require a degree, how often authority bias sways organizational decisions, and how intentional academics are about ensuring published science is unbiased.

Next, Siân Harris from INASP presented on the importance of equity in global scholarship—as authors, editors, reviewers, and publishers. She stated that, “It’s not enough to simply have access to the research other people have done.” Furthermore, Open Access can be a disadvantage when publishers charge high paper-processing charges, and research funding can be shaped by global north research interests. She also noted how discussions about global publishing often ignore the many good journals that are published in the global south. To improve global diversity in journals, Harris recommended thinking about geographical diversity in

The final speaker of Part 2 was Deborah Poff, who presented on the ways English has become the lingua franca of scholarship. The process of ranking universities around the world has escalated the criteria for being a researcher, while countless non-English-language journals are not added to many citation indexing services, creating a disadvantage for researchers whose first language is not English. Due to the dominance of the English language in scholarly publishing, many English-as-a-second-language writers experience a higher rejection rate, which might cause them to pay out of pocket for English editors or turn to predatory publishers.

During a brief question-and-answer period, an audience member asked whether there was an achievable end goal for diversity and inclusion. Racquel Jemison stated that diversity and inclusion is “a moving target, and it’s something that needs to be considered as a process, and not as a box to be checked.” In response, Nancy Roberts remarked that, “The metrics don’t matter; what matters is the implications of those metrics.”