

Lab Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement

Last updated: February 2021

❖ Purpose and Statement of Principles

As members of the Merrill and Boyce lab groups, we commit to fostering a culture of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI). To us, this means:

- Creating a workplace environment where all members feel valued, respected, supported, and given space to voice their opinions.
- Actively engaging in EDI related discourse and training.

In this document, we strive to develop an ethic that will not only be reflected in our attitudes and behaviours as members of the academic community at the University of Alberta, but be one that we will carry with us in our future private and professional lives. This statement was co-authored by members of the Merrill and Boyce labs and will act as a living document to keep us proactive and accountable.

❖ Justification for our responsibility to EDI

We are making efforts to respond to the systemic biases and barriers that have affected the full participation of historically underrepresented groups in STEM, particularly wildlife ecology. This document reflects our commitment to recruiting, including, and supporting underrepresented groups, because we believe including people of different experiences, cultures, and knowledge results in a more vibrant and robust research community. Many of us are fortunate enough not to feel the full effects and extent of discrimination, and therefore, are in a position to take action against it, helping to step up for the people who have previously or currently experience discrimination in STEM.

❖ Benefits of a strong EDI environment

- Incorporating diversity in research has benefits for everyone. Diversity can increase specialization, bolster problem solving, and check biases through the incorporation of different backgrounds, experience, and strengths. Diversity can improve understudied areas of research (e.g. [Haines et al. 2020](#)), and a number of studies suggest that diverse research groups publish more papers and have a higher number of citations per paper ([Freeman & Huang 2014](#)).
- A strong EDI focused environment allows all lab members to feel respected, valued, and supported, and therefore comfortable sharing their perspectives and ideas. A wider variety of perspectives and ideas will result in more well-rounded and stronger research projects, and potentially novel solutions to problems.

❖ Lab Expectations and Behaviours regarding EDI

- Use language that is inclusive and respectful when speaking with other lab members and in academic settings.
- Commit to self-learning in regards to EDI in academia, inclusive language, and how to be an ally to underrepresented groups in STEM.

- Remain open-minded and judgement-free when listening to lab member's perspectives, questions, and comments.
- Be aware of and acknowledge your own personal privilege and the effects it has in social dynamics within the academic community, and in particular in the Merrill-Boyce lab community in the Department of Biological Sciences.
- Ensure all lab members are given 'space' to be heard and feel comfortable sharing their perspectives.
- Commit to active self-reflection and group accountability as an ongoing process.

❖ **Commitments to EDI**

- Self education (see resources)
- Participate in regularly scheduled formal and informal EDI-related lab discussions
- Update EDI statement (annually)
- Incorporate EDI into the hiring process for technicians, post-docs, graduate students, and undergraduate student supervision
- Participate in EDI mentorship opportunities
- Diversify references in our own written work
- Include land acknowledgements in oral presentations, written communication materials, and on the Boyce and Merrill lab websites
- Attend conferences, seminars and workshops dedicated to EDI training and education that highlight researchers in academia from equity-seeking groups.
- Share opportunities found with other lab members. See examples below.

❖ **Resources:**

- [Ally workshop \(15min video\)](#)
- [Beyond Inclusion- Equality in Public Engagement](#)
- [Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion Teachers Toolkit](#)
- [Canadian University EDI Archive](#)
- [Implicit Bias Test](#)
- [Indigenous Canada course](#)
- [Nature article: These labs are remarkably diverse: here's why they're winning at science](#)
- [Scientific QUEERies](#)
- [Simon Fraser University Community EDI Guidelines](#)
- [Unconscious Bias Workshop \(1hr video\)](#)
- [University of Alberta- Biology Graduate Students' Association EDI Resources](#)
- [University of Alberta Land Acknowledgement](#)

DO NOT POST THIS SECTION TO WEBSITE (BELOW)

2020-2021 Schedule of EDI commitments:

- Nov 5th 2020 (Thurs)
 - Create an EDI statement and review before meeting with Lisa Willis
- Nov 26th 2020 (Tues)
 - Lisa Willis delivers EDI talk
- December 2020
 - Update our online research descriptions to include land acknowledgements
 - Include pronouns and land acknowledgement from U of A in email signature
- January 2021
 - Create an online presentation to send to USchool or schools for youth outreach by the end of January. Target youth audiences are students in Indigenous, rural and/or poverty-zoned communities in the Edmonton area

Full University of Alberta Land Acknowledgement:

- University of Alberta Land Acknowledgement: "*The University of Alberta respectfully acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Métis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.*"