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Vision for an empowering and inclusive lab

We recognize the ongoing negative impact of racism, anti-Black racism, colonialism, homophobia, and sexism, on the environment, society, academia, science, and the production of knowledge. We believe racial justice, climate justice, environmental justice, and social justice are intertwined and none can be achieved in isolation- we must strive for all four together. We will continuously build an inclusive lab to counteract these impacts. We will ensure our members, employees, and collaborators feel empowered to be themselves. We will provide a place where all our identities and differences are celebrated. We commit to navigating conflict and to strive for growth in the ongoing goal of liberation.

How we operationalize our vision

We will revisit this vision annually with new lab members, reflecting on current events in society, our institution, and experience.

We will identify racist, sexist, xenophobic, or anti-lgbtq+ comments, or any microaggression that could threaten our vision of an empowering and inclusive lab. The PI is primarily responsible for addressing conflicts that arise, and members may reach out to the ODI (Office of Diversity and Inclusion) to resolve conflicts involving the PI.

We will treat our commitment to fostering an anti-oppressive environment as seriously as we take map making, code protocols, and attention to detail in grants and publications.

We will invest in reading, watching new material, and seeking out guest speakers and experts to grow our understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion practices or experience every semester. At least one lab meeting per semester will be dedicated to this topic.

We will work to create additional opportunities, scholarships, and support for underrepresented lab members. This includes forwarding scholarships relevant to lab members, providing feedback on grants, cheerleading each other to create a positive environment that fights against imposter syndrome, and paying for the time community members spend on our projects.

We will reflect on our citation practices to ensure underrepresented voices are cited in our papers. This means generating a graph of the women, men, people of color, women of color, and scholars in the Global South represented in paper citations. We will show this graph to the lab, and consider putting those statistics in the acknowledgements of our papers. We will not set a quota but strive for our citations to represent the demographics in our world- and recognize when they do not.

We will work towards an inclusive empowerment outside the lab, in our larger department, in interactions with collaborators, and especially in interactions with communities who may benefit from or could be harmed by our work. We will review our impact annually on who is benefiting from or collaborating in our work, and reflect on that impact in the context of our mission.

We will hold space and empathy for lab members who are underrepresented when they experience oppression by supporting their expressed needs, including but not limited to, empathetic listening, time off from work, mapping supportive resources in the university, and conversations or hugs over coffee.