

Dear CRBS Colleagues,

This past year, the CRBS implemented its Action Plan on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. The Action Plan (available in its entirety on the CRBS web site) outlines numerous strategies to improve EDI in the CRBS, which we feel will be enhanced by maximizing our awareness of the underlying issues through clear communication within the Center. For these reasons, we have made a concerted effort to gather information from the CRBS community and to translate this information into action. Below, I present several major highlights achieved over the past year to illustrate the progress we are making towards our EDI goals.

Our first activity was to assemble a Standing EDI Committee, which is currently composed of nine CRBS members: 4 professors, 2 postdocs, and 3 graduate students. Membership in the EDI Committee will rotate to ensure that fresh ideas and enthusiasm remain at the forefront of our efforts (if you are interested in membership, please contact me!!). The EDI Committee meets three times per year and reports directly to the CRBS Executive Committee as part of the regular meeting agenda. The main tasks of the EDI Committee are to consolidate information on EDI-themed activities, to organize new events, to discuss and respond to EDI-related issues that arise with the center, and to brainstorm for new actions or policies that enhance EDI. In short, the CRBS now has a functioning body to ensure that our center remains adaptable as new issues arise.

As part of our commitment to maximizing awareness, we have implemented several major changes to our operations. First, we have added EDI components to our annual Studentship, Travel Award, and BlueSky funding competitions. Applicants for these competitions are now allowed (but not required) to submit an EDI statement, and reviewers are instructed to carefully consider the content of EDI statements when evaluating and ranking the merit of their assigned applications. We have also made all awards contingent upon the awardees completing EDI-themed training offered by one of several entities at McGill. Links to these workshops and seminars are also provided on the CRBS website. To further enhance awareness, communication, and input from the CRBS community, we report on EDI activities at the CRBS Annual General Meeting and we have established a confidential mechanism through the CRBS website for voicing comments, suggestions, concerns, and testimonials.

Other major activities include the hiring of an undergraduate Communications Assistant (Ms. Yutang Song) who will assist with the filming and production of a series of interviews (to be posted on the website) with students and faculty in the CRBS, intended to highlight the unique paths we have taken in our academic journeys. If you are interested in

volunteering for one of these interviews, please contact us (crbsedi_Group@McGill.onmicrosoft.com). Yutang is also assisting with the maintenance of information on the CRBS website. The following lists important EDI-related information that can now be found on the website:

1. Names and contact information for members of the Standing EDI Committee
2. Link to the EDI Action Plan
3. Annual EDI Statements from the Chair of EDI Committee
4. Links to EDI-themed workshops and events at McGill
5. Video EDI interviews with CRBS members
6. Webform for voicing confidential EDI-related concerns, suggestions, recommendations, and testimonials

Finally, in 2023, the CRBS also supported and co-sponsored several EDI-related initiatives across campus, including the Win4Science initiative and the annual Out Loud Symposium. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with these initiatives and to expanding our collaborations in the future.

Best Wishes, and please contact us if you have any your suggestions or recommendations.



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