

Editorials

What the Organization for Human Brain Mapping community is doing right

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Reflecting on the “State of the Brain” as an Organization for Human Brain Mapping (OHBM) member for nearly 20 years, I am heartened by how much we as a community are doing right. OHBM serves as a model for how to promote inclusive excellence in neuroscience. As a society, we have embraced diversity and inclusivity as key values and our science has been strengthened as a result. This emphasis on celebrating researchers from a range of backgrounds has been backed by funding to support conference attendance, inclusive programming, and equitable policies that continue to positively influence attendee experiences at our annual meetings. As diversity initiatives have come under attack in the United States, it is a relief to know that OHBM’s commitment is genuine and unwavering.

OHBM 2025 in Brisbane, like every OHBM meeting I have attended over the past 20 years, was a joyous reunion. I felt invigorated by the cutting-edge science as well as the collegial and collaborative atmosphere that has come to be a signature of the meeting. Most importantly, I was heartened to see the international community rallying in support of American scientists who have been facing unprecedented challenges as a result of recent government actions. As everyone is well aware, the funding landscape in the United States is undergoing dramatic and disturbing changes. Against this backdrop, seeing and reconnecting with friends and colleagues from all over the world was a welcome reprieve.

One thing I have always been proud of at OHBM is our genuine commitment to diversity and inclusivity. Even before the first iteration of the Diversity and Inclusivity Committee was formed, the OHBM Program Committee historically took great pains to ensure that speakers from all over the world, at different career stages, from different sociodemographic backgrounds and a variety of research topics were represented at the annual meeting. When I served as chair of the OHBM Program Committee, I was responsible for obtaining \$30,000 in funding from the National Science Foundation to support student travel to the annual meeting. Half of these funds supported students who identified as women or minorities.

Diversity and inclusivity have always been a strength of OHBM, and I truly believe that our Society serves as a

model for how to promote inclusive excellence in science. Over the past several years I have worked on multiple initiatives with the Diversity and Inclusivity Committee, including one to establish a code of conduct and another to introduce childcare grants to facilitate parent participation at the annual meeting. The committee actively promotes ongoing efforts through blog posts and publications such as “*Embracing diversity and inclusivity in an academic setting: Insights from the Organization for Human Brain Mapping*”¹ and “*Creating diverse and inclusive scientific practices for research datasets and dissemination*”.²

In 2019, the Diversity and Inclusivity Committee established the annual Diversity Symposium. At that meeting I was proud to organize and chair the first ever symposium entitled “*Using insights from social psychology and neuroscience to address gender bias*”. This annual symposium is now a regular event (<https://ohbm-dic.github.io/symposia/>). For the 2020 virtual meeting I helped organize and chair the second annual symposium on the topic “*Neuroscience and the LGBTQ community*” (<https://www.ohbm-brainmappingblog.com/blog/ohbm-2020-diversity-round-table-intersection-between-neuroscience-and-the-lgbtq-community>). For the 2021 virtual meeting, I helped organized the third symposium focusing on the topic “*Racial bias in neuroscience*” (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f730uB9_hdM). For the 2022 meeting when we were back in person, we organized the fourth symposium “*The Asian perspective on the effects of social, cultural, and*

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language barriers on inclusivity at OHBM" (<https://www.ohbmbrainmappingblog.com/blog/diversity-inclusivity-events-at-the-2022-ohbm-annual-meeting-if-you-want-to-go-far-go-together>). The topic of the 2023 symposium was "Using technology to enhance diversity and inclusivity in neuroscience and neuroimaging" and for 2024 we focused on "Diversity, equity, and inclusivity in artificial intelligence and neuroimaging." Following this great tradition, in 2025 the topic was "First nations people in neuroimaging research" (<https://www.ohbm-com.com/blog/dic-activities-obhm2025>). I am pleased to have been able to contribute to the development of diversity initiatives such as this one to support and encourage a new generation of researchers. These initiatives have helped to make our meetings more welcoming to all. One of the proudest moments of my career was receiving the inaugural OHBM Diversity & Inclusivity Champion Award in 2021 in recognition of this work.

Right now, diversity initiatives are under attack in the United States. Funds are being rescinded, programs are be-

ing dismantled, and advocates are facing increasing levels of scrutiny. In this climate, it is comforting to know that OHBM's commitment to diversity and inclusivity is not waver- ing. It is this solidarity that makes the OHBM commu- nity vibrant and resilient during challenging times. Stay strong!

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