



PRESS RELEASE

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Launch of the ALBA Declaration on Equity and Inclusion

An international group of brain scientists has launched the ALBA Declaration on Equity and Inclusion. More than 100 major international scientific institutions have endorsed the Declaration, which aims to raise awareness and provide a concrete set of actions that individuals and scientific institutions can commit to in order to make their organizations more equitable and inclusive.

Created in 2018, the ALBA Network is committed to promoting equity and diversity in brain sciences. ALBA provides a global network for sharing best practices and providing better visibility, networking and mentoring opportunities to scientists from underrepresented groups.

As a major step forward to promote a fair and inclusive research community, the ALBA Network is proud to present to the neuroscientific community the ALBA Declaration on Equity and Inclusion. The ALBA Declaration aims to raise awareness of challenges faced by underrepresented groups in science and academia and to provide a concrete set of actions that individuals and institutions can commit to in order to make their organisations and research communities at large more inclusive.

Including collective feedback from dozens of organisations, the Declaration focuses specifically on overcoming two specific barriers to equity: implicit biases and workplace cultures.

The ALBA Network will launch the Declaration during a special virtual event on Tuesday 12th January 2021 at 9 am EST/3 pm CET, on the occasion of the SfN Global Connectome. Prof Carmen Sandi, Chair of the ALBA Network and FENS immediate Past President, will start the event by introducing the ALBA Network, its mission and its activities. Then, Dr Megan Carey, Chair of the ALBA Declaration Working Group, will present the ALBA Declaration on Equity and Inclusion, including the goals ALBA wishes to achieve with this manifesto, the process followed to write it and the major action points laid out in the text. In the second part of the event, invited panellists will share real-life examples of effective implementation of the Declaration action points.

More than 110 major scientific organizations from across the globe such as The Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS), the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO), UCL, the European Brain Council (EBC), the FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence (FKNE), Black in Neuro, several Max Planck Institutes, the EPFL Brain Mind Institute, Carney Institute for Brain Science at Brown University, and the Champalimaud Foundation, have already endorsed the ALBA Declaration. Institutions and individuals from around the world are encouraged to indicate their support by signing the Declaration.

Dr Megan Carey, Chair of the ALBA Declaration Working Group, on the Declaration: "The Declaration outlines concrete, evidence-based actions that individuals and organizations at any level can take in order to make their environments more equitable and inclusive. It was drafted to be both impactful and broad enough to be widely adopted. We believe that adopting these principles will benefit all members of the research community."

Prof Carmen Sandi, Chair of the Network, on the Declaration: "This Declaration represents the backbone of ALBA's mission. We hope it will be a valuable instrument to help institutions and individuals implement key steps, to eventually ensure that all scientists have equal opportunities to thrive."

For more information, please visit the ALBA Network website: www.alba.network/declaration



About the ALBA Network

The ALBA Network was founded in 2018 by a group of international scientists to promote equity and diversity in brain sciences. It is led by the ALBA team composed of international brain scientists involved in research, education, communication and advocacy. The Network is hosted by the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS), which is a founding member along with the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO) and the Society for Neuroscience (SfN). ALBA is also supported by The Brain Prize (Lundbeck Foundation).

Website: www.alba.network

Contact information: info@alba.network

Online launch of the ALBA Declaration on Equity and Inclusion at SfN Global Connectome

ALBA will launch the Declaration during a special virtual event on Tuesday 12th January 2021 at 9 am EST/3 pm CET, on the occasion of the SfN Global Connectome. The ALBA Network and ALBA Declaration will be presented and the invited panellists will share real-life examples of effective implementation of the Declaration action points.

Panellists: Carmen Sandi (EPFL, Switzerland), Megan Carey (Champalimaud Research, Portugal); Laura Andrae (King's College London, UK), Tracy Bale (University of Maryland, School of Medicine, US), Stephen Curry (Imperial College London, UK), Yasmin Hurd (Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, US), Michelle D. Jones-London (OPEN, NIH, US), Diane Lipscombe (Brown University, US).

Website: www.alba.network/declarationlaunch-sfn

About FENS – the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies

Founded in 1998 at the first Forum of European Neuroscience, the Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS) is the main organisation for neuroscience in Europe. FENS currently represents 44 European national and single discipline neuroscience societies with more than 20,000 member scientists from 33 European countries. FENS' mission is to advance research and education in neuroscience within and outside Europe, and to facilitate interaction and coordination between its members.

Website: www.fens.org

Contact information: office@fens.org

About IBRO – the International Brain Research Organization

IBRO is the global federation of neuroscience organisations established in 1961 that aims to promote and support neuroscience around the world through training, teaching, research, outreach and engagement activities, and the publication of our two journals, *Neuroscience* and *IBRO Reports*. More than 90 international, regional and national scientific organisations constitute IBRO's Governing Council which, together with the IBRO Executive Committee and five Regional Committees, address the needs and advance the work of individual scientists and research communities everywhere. In addition, IBRO has partnerships with like-minded scientific societies and organisations to identify priorities and help bridge gaps in knowledge, investment and resources in the field of brain research.

Website: www.ibro.org

Contact information: secretariat@ibro.org



About SfN – Society for Neuroscience

Founded in 1969, the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) now has more than 37,000 members in more than 95 countries. Year-round programming includes the publishing of two highly regarded scientific journals, *JNeurosci* and *eNeuro*; professional development resources and career training through Neuronline, the Society's home for learning and discussion; science advocacy and public policy engagement including annual Capitol Hill Day; and a variety of engaging public outreach efforts, led by the expanding and interactive collection of public-facing resources on [BrainFacts.org](https://www.brainfacts.org).
Website: www.sfn.org

Contact information: info@sfn.org

About the SfN Global Connectome: A Virtual Event

This international digital neuroscience event is organised by the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) (11-13 January 2021). This event is designed to facilitate scientific exchange across the globe and across the field, providing scientists at all career stages, of all disciplines, with opportunities to learn, collaborate, and connect.

Website: www.sfn.org/meetings/virtual-events/sfn-global-connectome-a-virtual-event



List of Institutional Signatories as of 8 January 2021 at 9 AM CET (119)

Federation of European Neuroscience Societies (FENS), Europe
International Brain Research Organization (IBRO), International
FENS-Kavli Network of Excellence, Europe
European Brain Council (EBC), Europe
Champalimaud Foundation, Portugal
Black in Neuro, International
Carney Institute for Brain Science - Brown University, United States
Brain Mind Institute - EPFL, Switzerland
MPI for Brain Research, Germany
UCL, United Kingdom
Queer in Neuro, International
Wellcome, United Kingdom
Society of Neuroscientists of Africa (SONA), International

Addiction Institute of Mount Sinai, United States
Alzheimer's Research UK, United Kingdom
Basic Neurosciences - Neurosciences fondamentales - UNIGE, Switzerland
Belgian Brain Council, Belgium
Belgian Society for Neuroscience, Belgium
BeWiSe Belgian Women in Science, Belgium
Brain Center - UMC Utrecht, Netherlands
Brain Cognition Behaviour (BCB-NL), Netherlands
British Neuroscience Association, United Kingdom
Cajal Institute, Spain
Canadian Association for Neuroscience (CAN-ACN), Canada
Centre for Developmental Neurobiology - King's College London, United Kingdom
CNS-NYU, United States
CERVO Brain Research Centre, Laval, Canada
Cosyne, United States
Donders Institute for Brain, Cognition and Behaviour, Netherlands
Duke Neurobiology, United States
Dutch Neurofederation, Netherlands
Edinburgh Neuroscience - The University of Edinburgh, United Kingdom
Edmond & Lily Safra Center for Brain Sciences (ELSC), Israel
Ernest J. Del Monte Institute for Neuroscience, United States
Ernst Struengmann Institute for Neuroscience, Germany
European Brain and Behavior Society (EBBS), Europe
European Brain and Pharmacology Society (EBPS), Europe
European College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ECNP), Netherlands
European Federation of Neurological Associations (EFNA), Europe
European Sleep Research Society (ESRS), Europe
European University of Brain and Technology (NeurotechEU), Europe
Federación Latinoamericana de Neurociencias y el Caribe (FALAN), International
FORTH Institute of Molecular Biology & Biotechnology (IMBB), Greece
Georgian Neuroscience Association, Georgia
Grenoble Institut des Neurosciences (GIN), France



Heidelberg University Pain Consortium, Germany
Icelandic Society for Neuroscience, Iceland
Hellenic Society for Neuroscience, Greece
Hotchkiss Brain Institute - University of Calgary, Canada
Institut de Neurosciences Cognitives et Intégratives d'Aquitaine (INICIA), France
Institut du Cerveau – Paris Brain Institute (ICM), France
Institut du Fer à Moulin (IFM) , France
Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology & Neuroscience - King's College London, United Kingdom
Instituto de Medicina Molecular (IMM), Portugal
Instituto de Neurobiología (UNAM), Mexico
Instituto de Neurociencias de Alicante, Spain
Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência, Portugal
Interdisciplinary Institute for NeuroScience (IINS), France
International Behavioural and Neural Genetics Society (IBANGS), International
International Regulatory Peptide Society (IRPS), International
Italian Society for Neuroscience (SINS), Italy
Jan and Dan Duncan Neurological Research Institute (NRI), United States
Korean Brain Research Institute (KBRI), South Korea
LBI - KU Leuven Brain Institute, Belgium
Lille Neuroscience & Cognition Research Centre, France
Malaysian Society of Neurosciences (MSN), Malaysia
Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience, United States
Max Planck Institute of Psychiatry, Germany
Michigan Neuroscience Institute, United States
Middle East/North Africa Sub-regional Committee (IBRO-MENA), International
MIT Picower Institute for Learning and Memory, United States
MPI of Neurobiology, Germany
MRC Centre for Neurodevelopmental Disorders, King's College London, United Kingdom
National Neuroscience Society of Romania, Romania
Neurolab NL, Netherlands
Neuroscience Institute Cavalieri Ottolenghi, Italy
Neuroscience Ireland, Ireland
Neuroscience Society of Nigeria, Nigeria
Neuroscience Society of Turkey, Turkey
Neurosciences - GIGA - ULiège, Belgium
NeuroTech-NL, Netherlands
Norwegian Neuroscience Society, Norway
NutriNeuro Bordeaux, France
Oxford Neuroscience, United Kingdom
Pharmacology Institute, Heidelberg University, Germany
Research Institute at The Hospital for Sick Children Toronto, Canada
Research Institute Brain and Cognition - University of Groningen, Netherlands
RIKEN Center for Brain Science (CBS), Japan
Russian Society for Neuroscience, Russia
Sainsbury Wellcome Centre, United Kingdom
Salk Institute for Biological Studies, United States
School of Mind, Brain and Behavior - University of Arizona, United States



Serbian Neuroscience Society (SNS), Serbia
Slovak Society for Neuroscience, Slovakia
Société des Neurosciences, France
Society for Portuguese Neuroscience, Portugal
Society for the Neural Control of Movement , United States
Spanish Society of Neuroscience (SENC), Spain
Swiss Society for Neuroscience (SSN), Switzerland
Synapsy Swiss Center for Competence in Research, Switzerland
The Bernstein Network Computational Neuroscience, Germany
The Douglas Research Centre, Canada
The Egyptian Network of Neurodegenerative Diseases (ENND), Egypt
The Friedman Brain Institute, United States
The Mortimer B. Zuckerman Mind Brain Behavior Institute, United States
The Neuro (Montreal Neurological Institute-Hospital), Canada
Trend in Africa, International
UC Irvine Brain, United States
UCLIC - UCL INTERACTION CENTRE, United Kingdom
ULB Neuroscience Institute, Belgium
UMONS Research Institute for Health Science and Technology, Belgium
University of Sussex Research in Sussex Neuroscience, United Kingdom
VIB (Flemish Institute for Biotechnology), Belgium
Wellcome Centre for Integrative Neuroimaging, United Kingdom
World Wide Neuro, International
Wu Tsai Neurosciences Institute, Stanford, United States
Yale Department of Neuroscience, United States
Yale Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program (Yale INP), United States
Yale Kavli Institute for Neuroscience, United States

ALBA Declaration on Equity and Inclusion



Members of underrepresented groups face persistent barriers to equitable representation in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), particularly at advanced stages. Although the historical basis for and manifestations of underrepresentation vary by group, discipline, and region, there are striking commonalities in the end result – an apparent ‘leaky pipeline’ that drains the talent pool. The cost of this **loss of talent** is high – for individuals, for research, and for society as a whole.

ALBA is a network of brain scientists committed to fostering fair & **diverse** scientific communities. We have drafted this document as a resource for concrete, positive, evidence-based actions that individuals and organizations at any level can take to promote equity & inclusivity. We focus specifically on two contributing factors to perpetual underrepresentation in STEM: **implicit bias** & **workplace culture**. We believe that adopting the actions below will benefit all members of the research community and the scientific enterprise itself.

We recognize that there are many individuals & organizations who share these goals. We invite you to indicate your support by signing this Declaration.

We are all biased. What can we do?

Commit to recognizing & counteracting bias

- Establish a **working group** that includes key stakeholders & members of leadership
- **Have a policy.** Adopt a written Equity, Diversity & Inclusion policy. Share it widely
- Set **concrete goals** & identify relevant actions
- **Be data-driven.** Continuously collect data to monitor progress & test solutions
- **Raise awareness.** Provide unconscious bias training

Allyship & advocacy

- **Amplify the voices** of minoritized colleagues in both formal and informal settings
- **Nominate individuals** from diverse backgrounds for prestigious events, awards, & recognition

Selection, hiring, and assessment

- **Proactively solicit** applications from underrepresented groups
- Ensure balanced committee representation to minimize **biased gatekeeping**
- Use consistent, well-defined **evaluation criteria**
- Learn to identify and avoid **biased language**, for example in letters of recommendation, teaching evaluations, etc.
- Consider double-blind reviewing or separate streaming of applications to strive for **equitable success rates**

An inclusive workplace culture is a healthy environment for all.

Establish a positive workplace environment

- Adopt and enforce a **code of conduct**
- Follow the [Singapore Statement on Research Integrity](#)
- Endorse the [DORA Declaration on Research Assessment](#)
- Provide **onboarding/ orientation** for new employees to navigate organizational & local cultural norms
- Establish a **mentoring** system

Establish transparent career structures

- Implement clear **advancement** criteria
- Ensure **equal pay** for equivalent positions
- Ensure **equitable service loads** for teaching, advising, and committees
- Explicitly **recognize service** contributions
- Consider broadening **career paths** to provide opportunities beyond PI role

Promote healthy work-life balance

- Schedule all events during **appropriate working hours**
- Allow for **flexible** hours and teleworking where possible
- Facilitate **access to child/family care** (through onsite facilities and/or subsidization where possible)