Changing how we assess scientific research
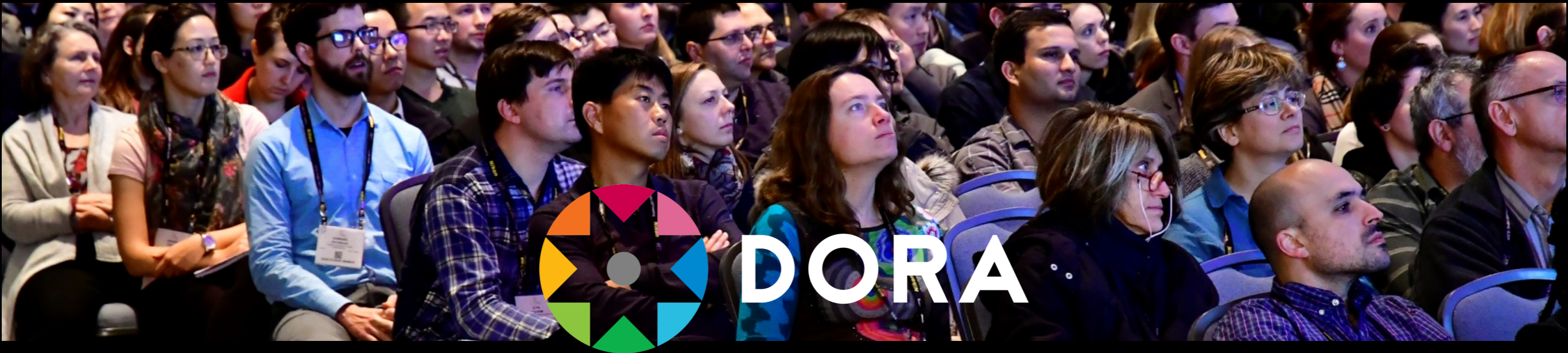

Declaration On Research Assessment
Improving how research is assessed

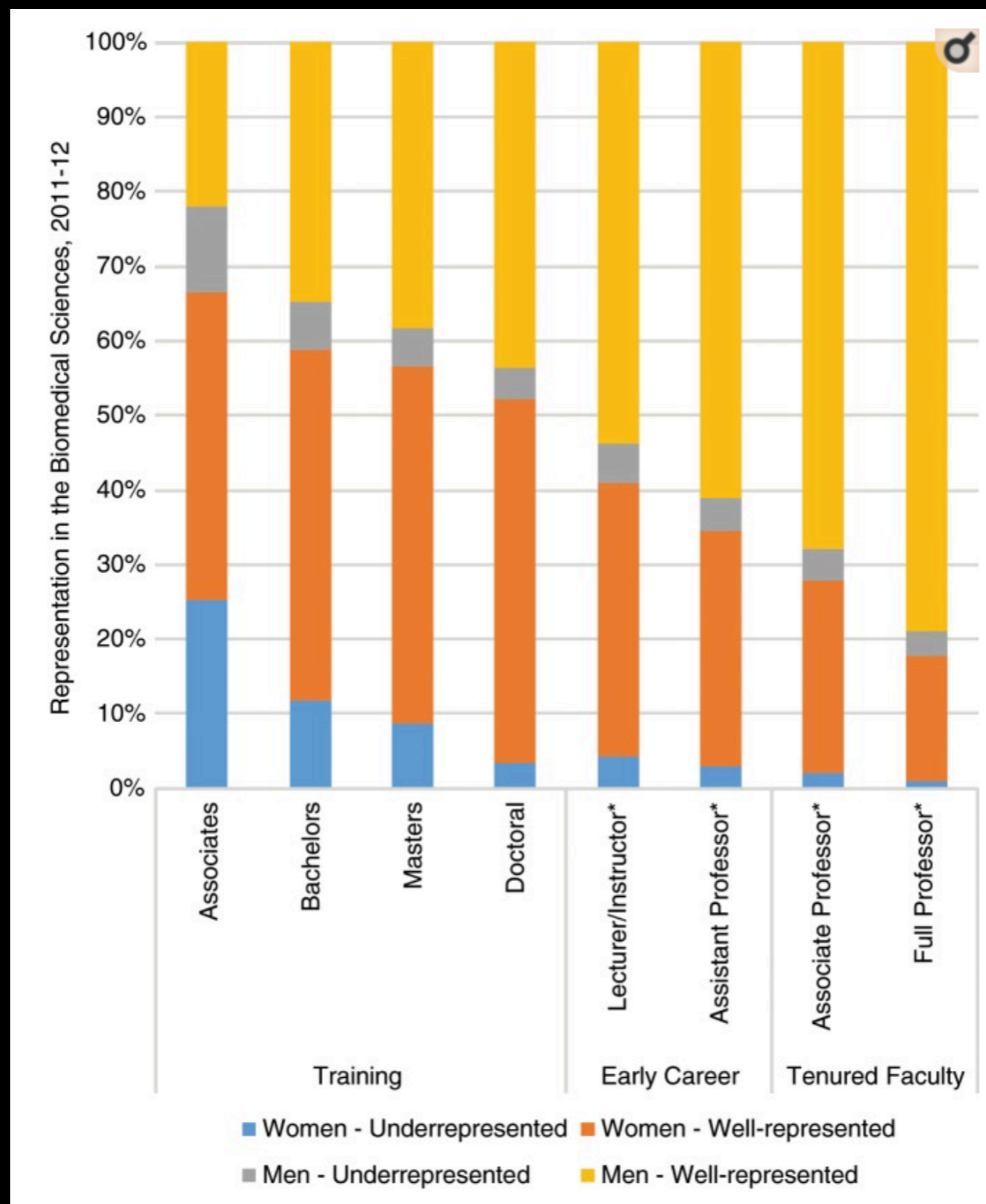sfdora.org
@DORAssessment

Signed by >500 organizations and >12,500 individuals

Supporting organizations

Promoting Equity in Research Assessment and Faculty Hiring

Valantine, et. al. 2016

Promoting Equity in Faculty Hiring
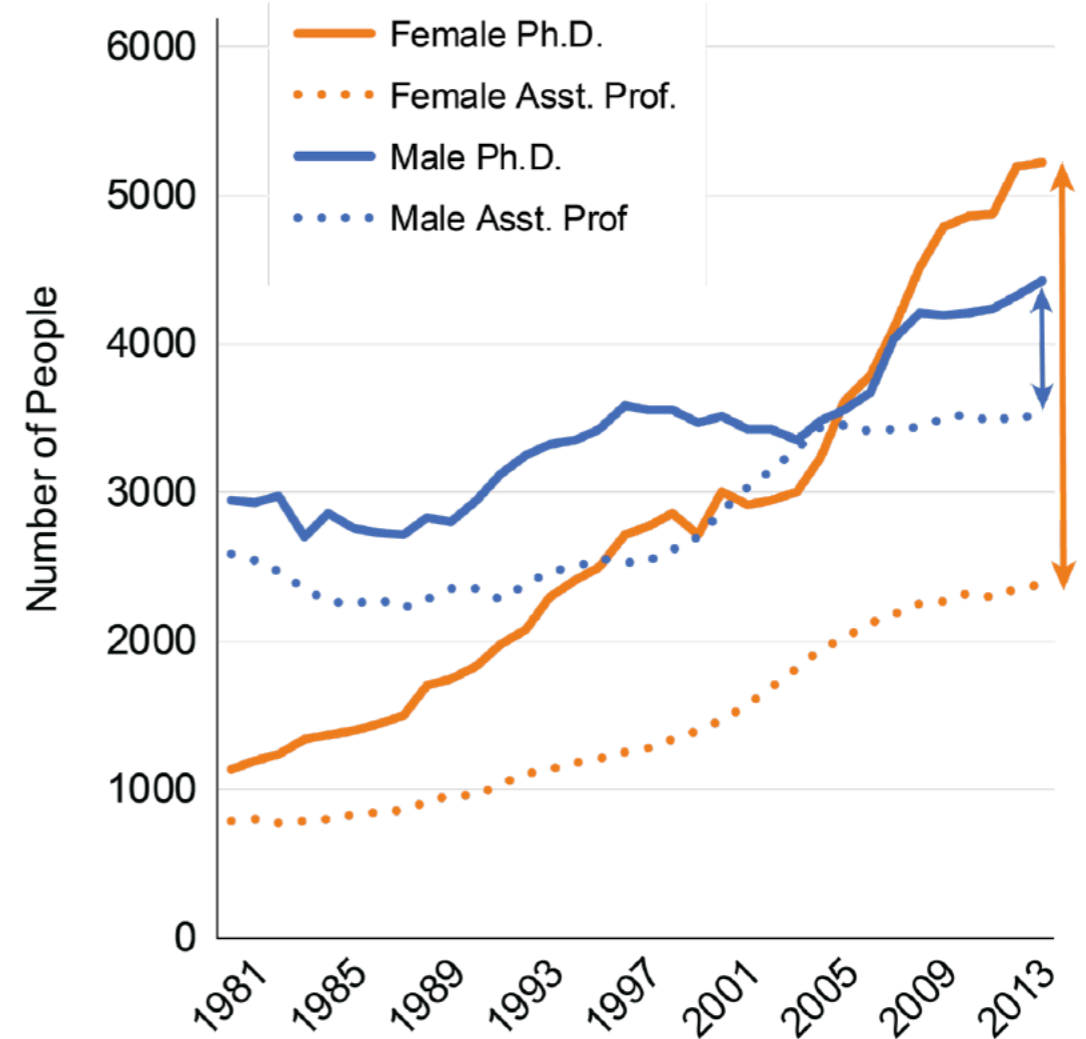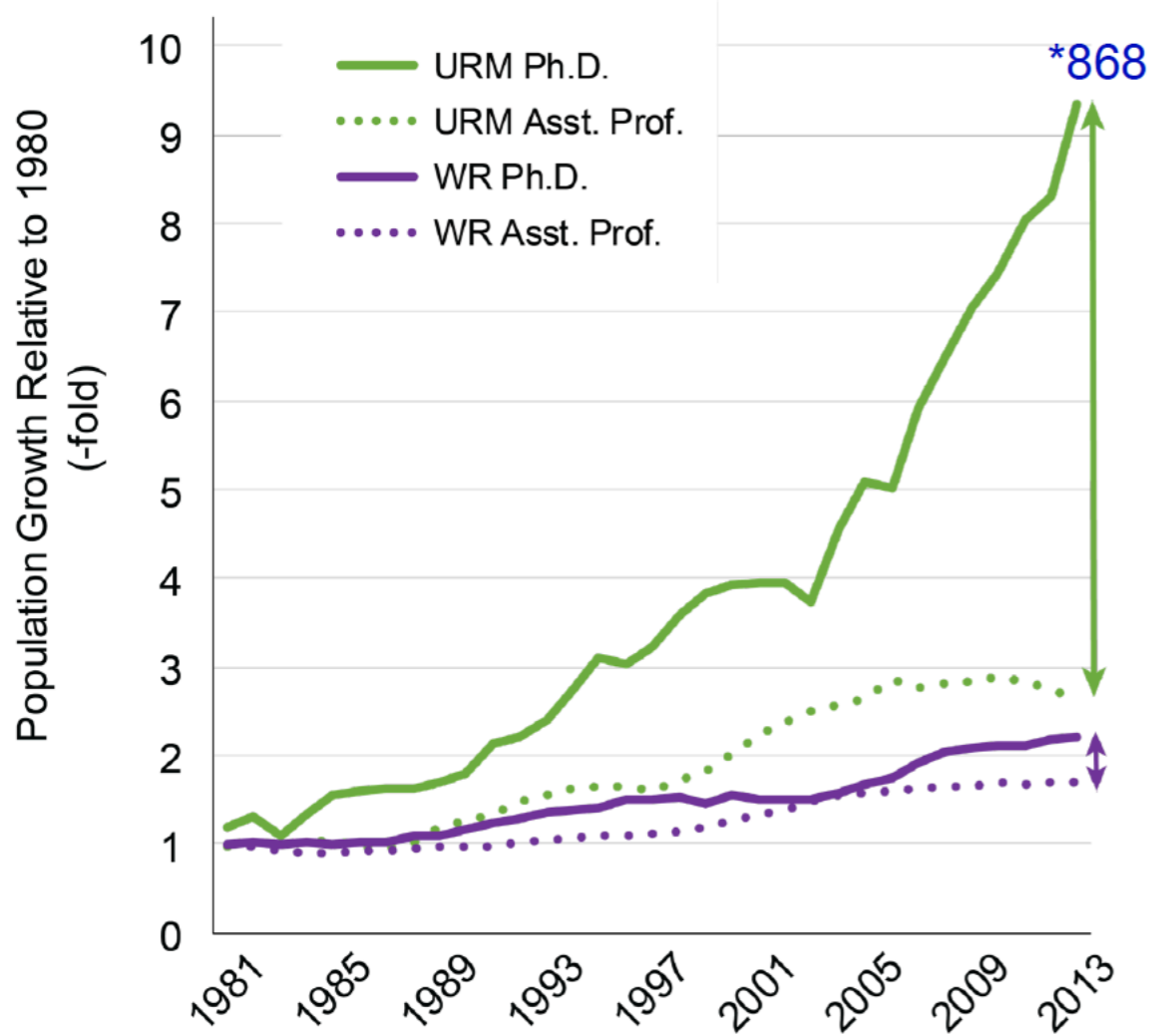
* 2017: 14% (2100) of PhDs in NIH relevant fields (*biological science, chemistry, and physics*)

Gibbs, K. D., et al. (2016). *Decoupling the minority PhD talent pool and assistant professor hiring in the medical school basic science departments in the US.*

Introduction of terms:
- **Members of underrepresented groups (URM)**
- **Historically excluded**
- **Marginalized**
- **Minoritized**

Strategies to improve equity in faculty hiring

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ABSTRACT Through targeted recruitment and interventions to support their success during training, the fraction of trainees (graduate students and postdoctoral fellows) in academic science from historically underrepresented groups has steadily increased. However, this trend has not translated to a concomitant increase in the number of faculty from these underrepresented groups. Here, I focus on proven strategies that departments and research institutions can develop to increase equity in faculty hiring and promotion to address the lack of racial and gender diversity among their faculty.

Evidence based strategies:
- **Develop a thoughtful and explicit commitment to equity**
- **Develop a rubric to assess diversity statements and use them early in research evaluation**
- **Use mechanisms to avoid relying on flawed assessment proxies**
- **Cluster hires to achieve critical mass and limit isolation**
- **Identify promising late-stage post-doc candidates and invite them for seminars or to apply for positions**

Developing a thoughtful and explicit commitment to equity

Be prepared to explicitly answer the reasons why your department and university should address equity during the faculty hiring process
- Value of diverse teams
- Deliberate attempt to correct for structural marginalization of some demographics
- Provide role models for graduate and/or undergraduate students

Will inform other practices in the department to make them more equitable
- Teaching and training of students
- Mentorship and sponsorship of students and faculty
- Retention of students in majors or programs
- Promotion and retention of faculty
- Improvement of climate and culture
- the experiences of ALL faculty during hiring and promotion will improve

Will inform job ad, its placement and recruitment
- Proactive versus passive recruitment
- May need to demonstrate commitment to applicant if your department doesn't have evidence of support of those historically excluded from faculty positions

Reconsidering assessment practices: Redefining excellence and merit

Reliance on proxies maintains structural marginalization
- **Where people have published**
- **Where people have trained**
- **Who people have trained with**
- **Diversity-Innovation Paradox: minoritized scholars innovate at higher rates (introduce links between previously unlinked concepts) but novel contributions are discounted (not adopted by others in the field)**

Develop mechanisms that move away from the inappropriate use of proxies
- **Sandra Schmidt's suggestion to have applicants identify and contextualize their graduate and post-doc work in the cover letter**

Use either formal or informal rubrics
- **Calibration: take subset of applications, have members score and articulate why they scored them**

Approach candidate assessment holistically
- **Diversity Statements**

Diversity statements can allow the holistic assessment of applicants

Successful at Boston College, UC Riverside, UC Berkeley and UC Santa Cruz

Diversity Statements
- **Focuses on diversity, equity and inclusion as *expertise***
- **Identity can be a major contributor to this expertise**
- **Makes invisible work visible**
- **Allows minoritized scientists to discuss barriers that they've overcome, contextualizing their research experience**

Have to commit to use diversity statements in this way, part of commitment to equity
- **Develop and use a rubric**
    - **UC's identify three areas: knowledge, previous examples of work, future plans for work**
- **Calibration**
    - **Take small subset of applications and have all committee members assess and discuss how they assessed them**
    - **Scores don't necessarily need to be the same between members but DO need to be individually consistent**
    - **Develop agreement on how significantly to weigh the contribution of expertise in diversity, equity and inclusion to final assessment**

Example of graduate admissions

Lessons learned

Be prepared for and develop responses to resistance
- **"Why do we need to change?"**
- **Insistence that structural marginalization doesn't contribute to the underrepresentation of some demographics and over-representation of others**
- **Insistence that academia is a meritocracy or that science is objective**
- **Concern that minoritized faculty members won't succeed**
- **Discomfort about discussing inequity: issues of "reverse racism," concerns about legality because of Proposition 209**

Be prepared for partner hire opportunities

Inclusion of diversity statements allows members of search committee to identify candidates who may also play important future leadership roles in the department

Identify equity advocates in department
- **Address concerns raised by candidates**
- **Continued roles advocating for candidate after hiring**

UCSC DIVERSITY FIRST cluster hire

Applicant pool:
55% male (campus average of PhD holders 46%)
43% female (campus average 54%)
1.3% African American (campus average 5.2%)
8.3% Latinx (campus average 7.5%)
38.3% Asian (campus average 14.7%)

Initial shortlist
33% male
67% female
8.3% African American
29.2% Latinx
12.5% Asian

Interviews (1 didn't come for an interview):
9/24 male
15/24 female
2/24 African or African American
5/24 Latinx
3/24 Asian or Asian American

Eight offers were made, 7 accepted:
3 Latinx, 2 Asian or Asian American and 3 white candidates
5 women, 3 men