

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Report

2021-2022



Whitehead
Institute

“Enhancing diversity, ensuring equity and fostering a safe and welcoming culture are fundamental to the Institute’s mission of creating new knowledge and preparing scientific leaders.”

RUTH LEHMANN

President and Director, Whitehead Institute



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President and Director
Whitehead Institute

Letter from the Director

Whitehead Institute's ability to continue as a leader in biological research and training depends on our being a diverse, equitable and inclusive community—a place where each person can thrive both individually and as part of a cohesive, highly effective organization.

Therefore, in July 2021 we announced a multifaceted Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DE&I). The core commitments made in the Plan include:

- Improving the hiring, retaining and promoting of diverse talent
- Creating and maintaining an inclusive culture that promotes physical and mental well-being and respect for all Whitehead Institute community members
- Developing partnerships to increase engagement and outreach with local communities to improve accessibility particularly for individuals from groups underrepresented in biomedical sciences
- Encouraging open dialogue and facilitating learning opportunities to address DE&I topics and making them available to the entire Whitehead Institute community

We also pledged to report annually on our efforts to meet those commitments.

I am pleased to present the first Whitehead Institute Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Annual Report detailing our progress in implementing the DE&I Strategic Plan.

Among our DE&I-focused achievements since July 2021 are:

- Formation of the Institute's DE&I Council, comprising representatives of faculty, trainees and administrative and research staff, Council members serve as ambassadors for diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the Whitehead Institute community and are responsible for supporting the Institute's DE&I commitments.
- Creation of a DE&I Seminar Series, which enables the Institute community to learn from and engage with prominent speakers from across the sciences, social sciences and humanities. Seminar topics have ranged from the origins of Juneteenth to Hispanic, Black

and Asian American/Pacific Hawaiian/Pacific Islander histories and heritages, to a celebration of Pride Month. In addition, we created a DE&I Heritage Email series, which informs the entire Whitehead Institute community about those topics and others including Native American Heritage Month, Women's History Month and Mental Health Awareness Month.

- Launching the Whitehead Institute High School Internship Program, in which high school students in grades 10 to 12 from historically underrepresented groups will work directly with our Members, post-docs and staff scientists to explore biomedical science and gain experience with hands-on research.
- Broadening and diversifying the pool of applicants to the Whitehead Fellows Program by expanding awareness and permitting self-nominations; and creating an option that enables selected Fellows to supercharge their professional development through focused training in cutting edge tools and methods. We also launched an expansion of our postdoc mentoring program, offering these early-career researchers opportunities for formal mentoring relationships with principal investigators from other labs.
- Engaging the entire Institute community—including faculty, staff, trainees and regular visitors—in a formal, small-group DE&I and Gender Inclusion Training program that promotes interpersonal engagement; and planning for a second training session in spring 2023.
- Appointing an Institute DE&I Officer (Dilly Wilson) and DE&I Specialist (Sharon Bright), who bring focused energy and insight to advancing the initiatives described in the DE&I Strategic Plan. In these roles, they report directly to me.

I am excited to see the commitments of our five-year strategic plan take shape and bring about change. I look forward to our continued collective efforts as we implement other aspects of the strategic plan this upcoming year.

I encourage you to review the Report in its entirety and to reach out to Dilly or Sharon if you have questions or thoughts on any element of our DE&I efforts.

Best regards,



Ruth Lehmann
President and Director, Whitehead Institute



Whitehead Institute Fellow Tobiloba Oni and Technical Assistant Salome Shubitidze
PHOTO: GRETCHEN ERTL/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE

Our DE&I Value Statement

Whitehead Institute believes diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) are integral to its values and mission. As a research institute dedicated to improving human health through biomedical science, we believe that diverse thought invokes creative inquiry, drives innovation and fuels scientific breakthrough. We welcome individuals of all backgrounds including race, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, age, veteran status, national origin, disability, marital status, parental status and socioeconomic status and/or origin.



Our DE&I Five Year Strategic Plan: Commitments for Enhancing Our Community

Fostering a more diverse, equitable and inclusive community takes a strong commitment to real, meaningful action. In 2020, with feedback from stakeholders across the Institute including the Whitehead Institute Board of Directors and faculty, Whitehead Institute developed the following Commitments, which outline our action-oriented approach to establishing a culture that values diversity of perspectives and is supportive of researchers and staff from a variety of lived experiences, perspectives and backgrounds.

Our Commitments

1

Improving hiring, retention and promotion of diverse talent

- Enhance professional development of future leaders in science
- Enhance professional development opportunities for administrative and research staff
- Increase outreach and hiring of diverse scientists and administrative and research staff

2

Creating and maintaining an inclusive culture that promotes physical and mental well-being and respect for all Whitehead Institute community members

- Conduct training to promote a more diverse, equitable and inclusive culture
- Build an inclusive One-Whitehead Culture

3

Developing partnerships to increase engagement and outreach with local communities to improve accessibility particularly for individuals from groups underrepresented in biomedical sciences

- Enhance targeted actions to build a diverse pipeline of future scientists

4

Encouraging open dialogue and facilitating learning opportunities to address DE&I topics which are available to the entire Whitehead community.

- Develop Seminar Series focused on DE&I topics
- Adopt a DE&I statement and post on Institute and individual lab sites
- Enhance communication on DE&I progress and activities



Whitehead Institute Member Olivia Corradin and Technical Assistant Zia Barnard
PHOTO: GRETCHEN ERTL/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE

Whitehead Institute DE&I Leadership

Council Members



Amanda Chilaka, Technical Assistant II, Genome Core



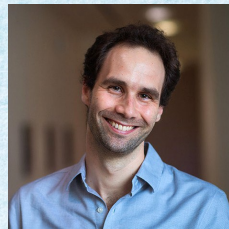
Julien Flynn, Postdoctoral Associate, Yamashita Lab



Lisa Girard, Director of Strategic Communications, Communications & Public Affairs



Chris Giuliano, Graduate Student, Lourido Lab



Sinisa Hrvatin, Whitehead Institute Member, Hrvatin Lab



Mackenzie Litz, Graduate Student, Li Lab



Stephen Mraz, Technical Assistant II, Genome Core



Anne Odera, Administrative Assistant, Weissman Lab



Ido Sagi, Postdoctoral Fellow, Young Lab



Reuben Saunders, Graduate Student, Weissman Lab



Uma Tejaswi, Core Facility Supervisor, Lab Materials Core

Staff



Dilly Wilson, Director of HR and Institute DE&I Officer



Sharon Bright, HR and DE&I Specialist

Whitehead Institute convened our first DE&I Council in 2021, with representation from across the Institute. The Council is made up of 11 members, selected to maximize diversity of perspectives. The Council meets regularly and Council members will serve one-year terms with bi-annual appointments. To ensure continuity from year-to-year and provide a strong foundation, half of the inaugural Council will serve 18-month terms.

The Council contributes thought leadership to innovative initiatives designed to enhance our community's inclusive culture. Since its inception, the Council has provided input on the DE&I Seminar Series, assisted with the Whitehead Institute High School Internship Program and has worked to design the Institute's inclusion networks.

The Institute Expands and Revamps Whitehead Fellows Program

At the heart of Whitehead Institute’s educational mission is the Whitehead Fellows Program—an initiative that has helped cultivate an extraordinary cadre of scientific leaders. The Fellows program provides talented scientists a rare opportunity: the chance to set up research programs of their own as an alternative to traditional post-doctoral positions. The Whitehead Fellows Program emerged from the notion that nurturing scientists during their most creative years will yield a new generation of leaders more rapidly than traditional programs.

This kind of support and freedom enables Whitehead Fellows to use their time at the Institute to concentrate solely on building a strong research program. In addition, Whitehead Fellows have the unique opportunity to establish and maintain an independent laboratory, something that many researchers don’t experience until later in their careers.

Whitehead Fellows Program has incorporated the Institute’s DE&I Commitments in its outreach, selection, and administration processes. This year, Whitehead Institute broadened the pool of remarkable candidates by expanding awareness, permitting self-nominations and creating an option that enables selected Whitehead Fellows to supercharge their professional development through focused training in cutting-edge tools and methods.

Whitehead Fellows take advantage of the Institute’s state-of-the-art research facilities, as well as the collegial and supportive environment of Whitehead Institute and Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

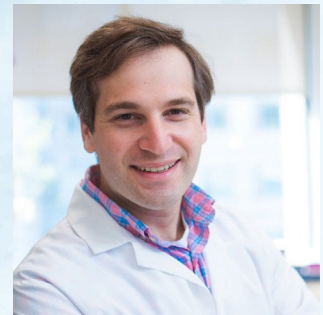
Current Whitehead Fellows



Lindsey Backman



Tobiloba Oni



Kipp Weiskopf

PHOTOS: GRETCHEN ERTL/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE



Whitehead Institute Member Yukiko Yamashita and Graduate Student Julia Apiki

PHOTO: GRETCHEN ERTL/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE

DE&I Seminar Series

Throughout the year, our community comes together to broaden our awareness of diverse perspectives through the DE&I Speaker Series. Whitehead Institute has welcomed six speakers since the program's launch in June 2021.



Bettye Kearsse

June 2021

"Always Remember. You're a Madison: One Family's Juneteenth Story", Dr. Bettye Kearsse, retired pediatrician and geneticist explored the history and significance of Juneteenth through the lens of one family.



Matthew Clair

February 2022

"Recognizing and Responding to Racism: Lessons for Health and Medicine", Dr. Matthew Clair, Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and (by courtesy) the Law School at Stanford University, explored racism in the healthcare system.



Marcelo Suárez-Orozco

October 2021

Dr. Marcelo Suárez-Orozco, Chancellor, University of Massachusetts, Boston gave a talk on "Rethinking Latino/x Migration in the Age of Global Vertigo" which explored the changes in mass migration and immigration challenges.



Sandra Yamate

May 2022

"A Historical Examination of Racial Equity in America: Asian Americans", Dr. Sandra Yamate, CEO of the Institute for Inclusion in the Legal Profession. Sandra Yamate's talk at Whitehead Institute centered on policies, practices and laws throughout history that disproportionately impact Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.



Jeremy Yoder

June 2022

“From Biodiversity to Biologists’ Diversity”, Dr. Jeremy Yoder, Assistant Professor of Biology at California State University Northridge.

Dr. Yoder’s talk centered on LGBTQ+ representation and experiences in science and how to make scientific workplaces more welcoming.



Lynn DeCouto

October 2022

“Creating Accessible PowerPoint Presentations 101”, Lynn DeCouto, Marketing and Communications Manager, Work Without Limits. Ms. DeCouto’s presentation taught the community six ways to make PowerPoint presentations accessible to individuals who are visually impaired or have other disabilities.



Postdoctoral Mentorship Program

The DE&I Council's first major initiative, the Postdoctoral Mentorship Program, was launched at the 2022 Whitehead Institute Scientific Retreat this September. Through the program, postdocs can enhance their professional development by receiving mentoring from principal investigators other than their own. Postdocs will have access to career advice from principal investigator at different career stages or from different trajectories, or from principal investigators who share an aspect of identity with mentees. This program will build meaningful relationships that strengthen our community.

Former postdocs of Whitehead Institute have volunteered to participate in our postdoc mentoring program, providing postdocs with access to even broader perspectives and mentoring from external sources and industries.



At the 2022 Whitehead Institute Scientific Retreat, postdocs enjoyed a dedicated opportunity to get to know potential mentors.

PHOTOS: JORDANA BLOOM/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE

Intersections Science Fellows Symposium

Whitehead Institute is a proud contributor to the Intersections Science Fellows Symposium (ISFS). ISFS is a multi-institutional collaborative effort convened to showcase the outstanding research contributions of postdocs in the biological sciences, including those from backgrounds historically underrepresented in academia. The Institute's deep investment in this program was highlighted by the involvement of our Members, Harvey Lodish, Pulin Li and David Bartel as faculty advisors.

November 2021 Intersection Fellow Participant
Adrianna San Roman
Postdoc, Page Lab

San Roman's studies the contributions of sex chromosomes to sex differences in gene expression.



Adrianna San Roman
Postdoc, Page Lab

PHOTO: LUKAS CHMATAL/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE



Whitehead Institute Fellow Kipp Weiskopf and Technical Assistants Jose Velarde and Juliet Allen

PHOTO: GRETCHEN ERTL/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE

Pipeline Partnerships

Science is collaborative and our collective success has always depended upon supporting the growth and development of future scientists. Whitehead Institute continues that fundamental aspect of our scientific leadership guided by our DE&I Commitments.

Whitehead Institute partnered with two local organizations that support students from underrepresented minority backgrounds to establish high school student internship programs, with the first cohort of students participating over summer 2022.

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF BOSTON

Whitehead Institute partnered with the Boys and Girls Club of Boston (BGCB) Ready to Work University: a program for high schoolers that supports skill building and job readiness, leading up to a paid internship at the Institute. Ready to Work provides a support network for young people from Boston and Chelsea interested in personal development through workforce readiness. Ready to Work University encourages high school students from underrepresented communities in Boston to build their foundational skills for life and work, explore their career interests and passions and prepare for work-based learning and employment opportunities through BGCB.

Whitehead Institute is proud to share that our Ready to Work intern Kamea Johnson, a Weston high school graduate, has begun college at North Carolina Central University this fall.

ENROOT

Whitehead Institute is partnering with Enroot to provide a paid fall internship to a local high school student. Enroot, established in 1938 and originally named the Cambridge Community Federation, is a local organization dedicated to empowering low-income immigrant youth to achieve academic, career and personal success through inspiring out-of-school experience.

Whitehead Institute is proud to introduce our first Enroot intern Dayana Robillard, a sophomore at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School, who is learning and working out of the Cheeseman lab.

PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Whitehead Institute has made DE&I a core consideration throughout the selection, development and administration of the Institute's middle and high school programs. Importantly, scholarship access has been improved and enhanced, increasing opportunity for students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds.



Kamea Johnson, Ready to Work intern, Boys and Girls Club, currently at North Carolina Central University
PHOTO: MADELEINE TURNER/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE



Dayana Robillard, Enroot intern, currently at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School
PHOTO: BRITANIA MOODIE/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE



Former MSRP Student, Alicia Zamudio Montes de Oca, completed graduate work in the Young Lab and former MSRP Student, Mishra Gargi, currently enrolled in the MD/PhD program at SUNY Upstate Medical University

PHOTO: GRETCHEN ERTL/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE

MIT SUMMER RESEARCH PROGRAM IN BIOLOGY

Whitehead Institute is proud to be a partner of the Bernard S. and Sophie G. Gould MIT Summer Research Program in Biology (MSRP). The program provides a unique opportunity for students who do not have access to cutting-edge research facilities at their own institution to conduct supervised research in a fast-paced environment with state-of-the-art research facilities and to experience first-hand the academic, social and cultural environment at MIT.

Through the MSRP, we continue to deepen our commitment to enhancing the pipeline of future scientists. The MSRP is designed to encourage students from underrepresented minority groups, first-generation college students, students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds and students with disabilities to attend graduate school and pursue a career in basic research.

The Institute's investment in the MSRP has had remarkable benefits for our talent pipeline, to the benefit of our community. Several of the Institute's current researchers, including graduate students, Whitehead Fellow and lab staff are alumni of the program.

Announcement: Whitehead Institute High School Internship Program

We are proud to announce the Whitehead Institute High School Internship Program, kicking off in 2023. The program was created to address underrepresentation of racial and ethnic minorities in scientific research and is committed to enhancing targeted actions to build a diverse pipeline of future scientists.

Beginning Summer 2023, Whitehead Institute will offer a six-week paid summer internship including transportation expenses for high school students in grades 10, 11 and 12. The program will provide participating students with an opportunity to explore science and gain research experience.

The program will run from July 10 to August 18, 2023.



SUMMER 2023
Whitehead Institute
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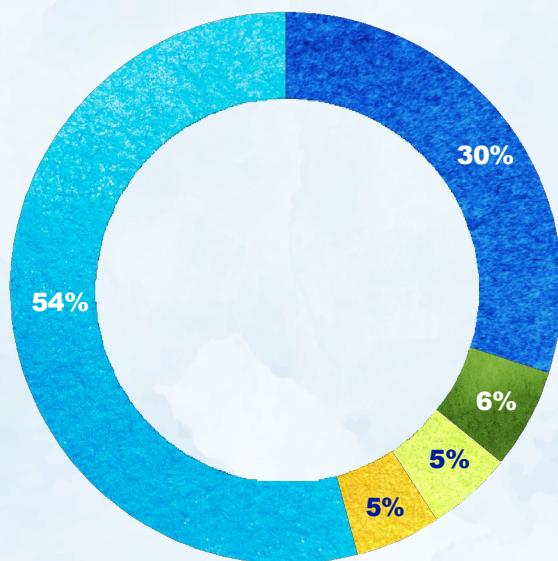
Associate Director of Safety Pari Arokiaraj, Executive Assistant & Senior Projects Manager Jean Smith, Executive Assistant Lisa Bolduc and Facilities Coordinator Lauren Yee
PHOTO: MADELEINE TURNER/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE

Ethnic Diversity at Whitehead Institute

Whitehead Institute has been enhancing its targeting recruiting strategies in order to increase the representation of diverse ethnic groups in its applicant pools. We are pleased to see increasing diversity of our community across both administrative and research sectors.

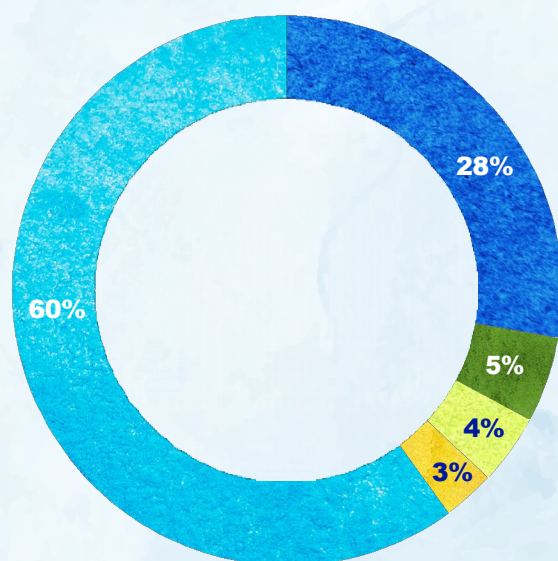
AS OF
July 1, 2022

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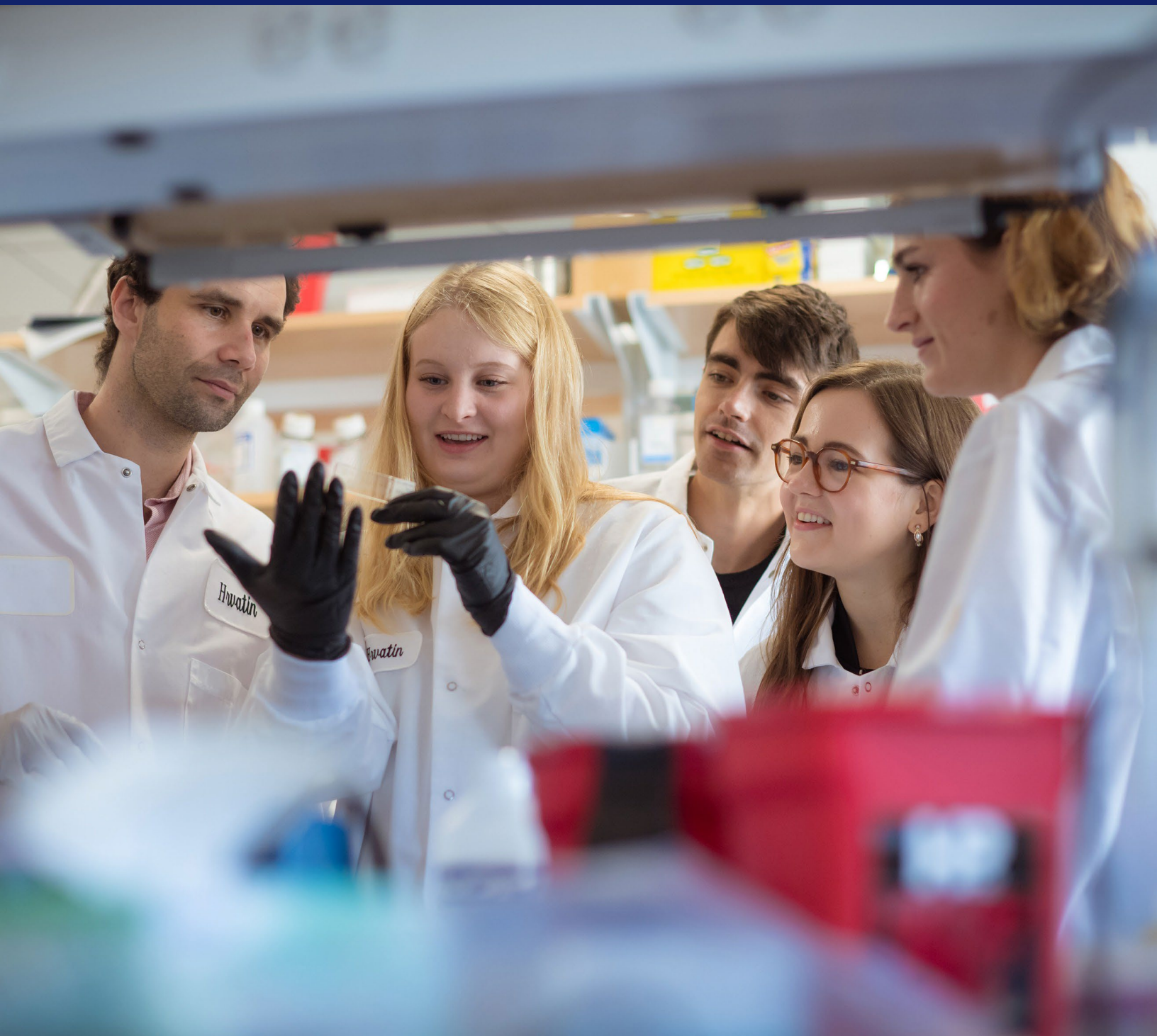


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July 1, 2020

n = 443*



* INCLUDES FACULTY, STAFF, POSTDOCS, STUDENTS AND VISITING SCIENTISTS.



Whitehead Institute Member Sinisa Hrvatin, Technical Assistant Aurora Lavin-Peter, Graduate Students Julian Roessler and Kathrin Kajderowicz and Technical Assistant Lorna McElrath

PHOTO: GRETCHEN ERTL/WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE



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