

Science Mission Directorate Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility

ANNUAL REPORT

May 2021 – June 2022



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Inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA) are essential to the success of NASA Science and are shared responsibilities for all of us to strive toward and support in our culture, practices, and across the Science Mission Directorate (SMD) portfolio. The cross-cutting IDEA Working Group (IDEA WG) supports SMD's progress toward this mission and ensures ongoing actions in an intentional, informed approach.

As articulated in our vision, SMD is actualizing an environment where IDEA principles are integrated into our ways of working and being. We recognize the barriers and obstacles that historically marginalized groups face societally, in the workplace, and in science. We are committed to relieving these inequities with boldness and forward-learning practices—for systemic and lasting change. We value every SMD team member for their diversity of thought, unique background, and whole selves. And, larger still, we desire that all science funded by NASA, regardless of location, is comprised of teams that reflect the nation.

This document is organized by SMD's IDEA strategic priorities and highlights specific accomplishments toward each goal. The IDEA WG has developed efforts across SMD, comprised of members of all divisions and with representation and participation from SMD leadership. Numerous division-level, team, and project actions furthering IDEA coexist with this approach and help advance our collective progress.

Sincerely,

Tresa Mitchell and Eric Holmes
IDEA Working Group Co-Chairs

Working Group Members Listed on p.8




Annual Report Objective

SMD's commitment to IDEA has moved from philosophical and value grounding to action throughout the past year. This annual report reviews IDEA progress from May 2021 – June 2022. This report serves as a review of progress with key outcomes for each priority and past/upcoming areas of work.

SMD's IDEA Strategy

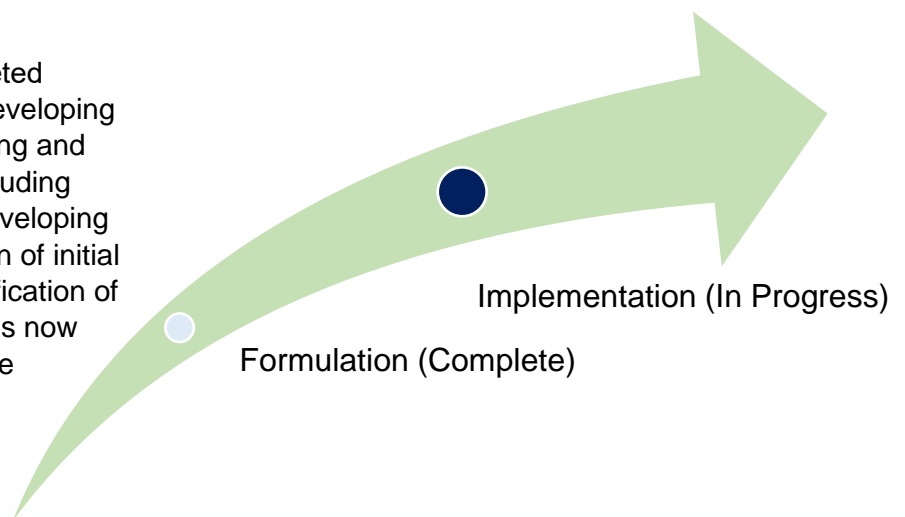
SMD developed and launched its own IDEA-focused strategy in February 2022. While distinguishable from the broader agency's NASA's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility (DEIA) plan, the IDEA strategy is congruent with the larger plan's goals. The IDEA strategy is action-oriented and agile.

Developed with the awareness that full IDEA maturation occurs in a 3–5-year timeframe, this 2022 – 2023 strategy selects priority areas based on SMD's existing efforts and progress. The plan's strategic goals are always present, reflecting SMD's commitment to hold itself accountable first.

Strategic Priorities				
Priority 1 	Priority 2 	Priority 3 	Priority 4 	Priority 5 
Expand entry pipelines, career advancement, and leadership access.	Develop a robust internal infrastructure to ensure synergy and alignment in IDEA implementation.	Ensure that all team members can meet the demands of their work and raise challenges. Commit to accessibility in all applications.	Bring the community in to SMD to fulfill NASA's goal of building a science team reflecting the nation and living the administration's priorities.	Strengthen and forge symbiotic relationships with underrepresented communities.

Implementation Stage

SMD's IDEA efforts have completed formulation activities including developing the IDEA WG Charter, establishing and exercising the WG structure (including multiple leadership rotations), developing an IDEA strategy, and completion of initial set of primary actions with identification of the next set of actions. The WG is now focusing on implementation of the strategy.



Approach

SMD's IDEA Strategy takes a human-centered design approach to each of its goals and actions, whereby we start with and continuously consider the needs, experience, and goals of the people we work with at the core of developing any actions or initiatives. This annual plan meets SMD where it is in its IDEA maturation journey while advancing equitable processes and practices.

This strategy is a living, agile framework with strategic priorities and actional steps that are constantly evolving.

Critical in the design of SMD's approach to IDEA implementation is the direct feedback loop where insight from stakeholders continuously informs ongoing efforts. For example, input from the anonymous feedback box, or comments shared during monthly conversations are used directly to shape small group discussions, future learning offerings, etc.



Strategic Priority 1: expand entry pipelines, career advancement, and leadership access

Primary Outcome: Advancing diversity of SMD's leadership team, thereby leading to more and better innovation and increased social equitable impacts.

Progress Indicators

- Participation in career development programs (shadowing, mentoring) particularly among underrepresented groups
- Expanded diversity represented in decision-making roles (examined year-over-year)
- Business case understanding and transparent sharing of the data across SMD

2021 – 2022 Completed Actions

- Bias trainings
- SMD job shadowing program

2022 – 2023 Planned Actions



Evaluate paths to decision-making roles



Expand mentorship & Job shadowing programs



Expand learning offerings



Strategic Priority 2: develop a robust internal infrastructure to ensure synergy and alignment in IDEA implementation

Primary Outcome: Demonstrating commitment and awareness at a leadership level supports implementation and ensures alignment and adoption across SMD.

Progress Indicators

- Consistent coordination and dialogue between SMD leadership and working group leads and members
- Awareness of IDEA efforts across divisions and effective collaboration with division teams/ division-level efforts
- Communications metrics of internal resources and communication tools (SharePoint, Teams)

2021 – 2022 Completed Actions

- Increased communications channels, diversifying messaging
- Launched IDEA Central (internal resource hub)
- Exercised IDEA Working Group infrastructure and collaboration

2022 – 2023 Planned Actions



Increased internal communications & partnership with division-level teams



Equity Action planning and alignment

- Tracking for White House Equity Action Plan alignment and responses
- Monthly Conversations to increase broad awareness of IDEA Concepts across SMD



Expansion of inclusive language resources and alignment



Priority 2

Inclusive Language

The words we use are key to creating psychologically safe, inclusive, and welcoming environments. As language is constantly evolving, it is important to continue to be considerate and have an awareness of how others may receive what we say. By embracing inclusive language, we communicate effectively with more people and better adapt to a diversifying society. The IDEA WG developed an Inclusive Language Glossary, building on the Earth Science Division’s “Speak Up” series, a newsletter that shares insight on exclusionary terms, offers the historic and social context behind them, and recommends more inclusive alternatives.

Strategic Priority 3: ensure that all team members can meet the demands of their work and raise challenges. Commit to accessibility in all applications.

Primary Outcome: Increasing psychological safety, which is especially critical for marginalized racial groups and their work performance, and accessibility options, both components of an organically inclusive environment.







Progress Indicators

- Engagement with internal feedback mechanisms with thoughtful responses
- Participation in dialogues and small group discussion sessions
- Pulse survey to test learning transfer efficacy following trainings
- Increased internal awareness of accessibility best practices

2021 – 2022 Completed Actions

- Baseline climate survey of CS personnel (66% completion rate)
- Anonymous feedback box for staff to provide input
- Hosted initial set of Equity Dialogues (small group discussions)
- Monthly conversation introductory learning offerings
- Developed accessibility meeting support resources, socialized best practices

2022 – 2023 Planned Actions

- 
 Climate survey phase two with full SMD population (CS and contractors), analysis with baseline and FEVs data
- 
 Resources on psychological safety and best practices
- 
 Expand anonymous feedback mechanisms and small group dialogue sessions
- 
 Create additional resources and tools on accessibility and neurodiversity



66%

of SMD's civil servant population responded to the first-ever Climate Survey.

Survey Analysis *Climate Survey Release*

SMD released its first-ever Climate Survey to measure inclusion across cohort demographics. The survey was restricted to civil servants only due to Paperwork Reduction Act requirements but updates seek to include contractor personnel in the next Climate Survey release. Sixty-six percent of SMD's civil servant population responded to the survey. The survey asked multiple questions mapped against psychological safety indicators as related to IDEA values.

The Climate Survey yielded tangible recommendations for leadership:

- Socialize inclusion gaps across SMD (share data on diverse representation in proposals, feedback received from the feedback anonymous box, the strategic plan, and survey results like these).
- Connect the DEIA and IDEA plans and host an internal discussion to introduce them.
- Continue publishing material and IDEA-related learning experiences—consider ways to amplify messaging.
- Add human-centric, team and individual, messaging to IDEA-focused stories of lessons learned (from SMD to SMD).
- Continue to amplify and develop feedback channels, such as the anonymous feedback box.
- Highlight persona-focused inclusion-in-action best practices, resources, case studies, and content.
- Increase transparent conversations, potentially, in smaller groups with senior management and across divisions.
- Continue showcasing leadership awarding employees who dissent for the greater good.

Strategic Priority 4: bring the community to SMD, building science teams reflecting the nation

Primary Outcome: Creating Shared internal understanding of areas of greatest need for increasing diversity allows for specific strategies to broaden participation externally and internally among underserved/underrepresented populations.

Progress Indicators

- Shared understanding of dataset and change story for SMD and external science community
- Increased (%) of diverse representation on review panels
- Viewership numbers for digital media describing the varied opportunities and career tracks at SMD




Progress Indicators (Continued)

- Increased (%) coaching opportunities for ROSES and PI Launchpad processes while gathering qualitative feedback
- Increased awareness and reflection of IDEA goals among mission teams

2021 – 2022 Completed Actions

- SPD08 amendment on reporting demographics
- Inclusion Plan pilot and template language on inclusion values in ROSES
- Reviewing and identifying actionability of Equity RFI responses

2022 – 2023 Planned Actions

-  Review datasets and develop change story, socialize with SMD
-  Adopt a formal policy/plan to diversify review panels
-  Create recruitment vignettes for job vacancy announcements featuring a range of viewpoints
-  Review ROSES and PI launchpad processes to uncover gaps and opportunities
-  Develop IDEA learning offerings for mission teams



Priority 4

Strategic Priority 5: strengthen and forge symbiotic relationships with underrepresented communities



Primary Outcome: Establishing and maintaining deliberate and stronger cadence and relationships with underrepresented institutions and community members, thereby exhibiting NASA's core values of lasting relationships reflecting commitments to the American public at large and especially underserved populations.


Progress Indicators

- Increased touchpoints with HBCUs (via email, additional meetings, event attendance, etc.)
- An outlined scope and discovery of opportunities or gaps related to the supplier diversity pipeline
- Increased attendance at outreach events, affinity group conferences

2021 - 2022 Completed Actions

- HBCU regional discussion to learn about gaps

2022 - 2023 Planned Actions

-  SMD Bridge Program workshops and activities



2021 - 2022 Completed Actions

- High School internship program with diverse participants and collaborators
- Numerous external engagements and presentations:
 - Inclusive Lunar Exploration (January 2022)
 - IDEA in Planetary Science (April 2022)
 - Association for Women in Science: Diversity at NASA (April 2022)



Priority 5

2022 - 2023 Planned Actions



Expanding opportunities to connect with underrepresented communities



Complete a full evaluation of supplier diversity pipelines and IDEA review in procurement activities



Develop internal/external resources for networking

Conclusion

SMD's progress over the past year indicates our dedication to executing this multi-pronged approach and actualizing systemic and lasting change by fostering inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility across all elements of our work. This effort is evidenced by leadership's unwavering support, SMD participation in programming and training, and the day-to-day requests for guidance on matters that require the human element to be embedded. In the year to come, more data-centric information will be made available to track progress and dashboard against the many IDEA-related activities occurring throughout the division. Given these efforts, the IDEA Working Group understands the value of looking beyond the numbers and into cultural norms and shifts. The progress that the team has made has been significant thus far—as growth in this area continues— so too will be the results.

Looking Ahead

The IDEA WG has a few key areas of focus for the year ahead:

- Second phase of climate survey to achieve more comprehensive dataset of IDEA perspectives among CS and contractor staff
- Continued linkage between SMD IDEA Strategy and alignment with agency DEIA plan, White House Equity Action Plan, and other White House initiatives
- Increasing IDEA efforts in NASA-funded research, expanding pilot of inclusion plan, developing codes of conduct and learning offerings/resources for mission teams
- Expanding partnerships and engagements with underrepresented groups through the SMD Bridge Program, dedicated direct outreach efforts, and resource development

Collaboration with SMD Leadership

- Regular IDEA quarterly updates and discussion with SMD Leadership and AA
- Participation in leadership development opportunities ex. job shadowing and mentorship program
- Championing inclusive language use and encouraging staff to participate in IDEA efforts
- Collaboration on key initiatives to ensure successful implementation and adoption

IDEA Working Group Members 2021–2022

- Karen Flynn, Senior Champion
- Tresa Mitchell, Working Group Co-Chair
- Doris Dau, Former Working Group Co-Chair
- Eric Holmes, Working Group Co-Chair

Programming Subgroup

- Tahani Amer, Subgroup Chair
- Andrew Garza
- Darcia Brown
- Christopher Caisse
- LaJuan Moore
- Susanna Finn

Missions, Projects, Programs Subgroup

- Lucas Paganini, Subgroup Chair
- Ryan Watkins, Subgroup Deputy Chair
- Brad Bailey
- Nicola Fox
- Douglas Hudgins
- Nicholas Jedrich
- Greg Robinson
- James Herrington

Leadership Development Subgroup

- Anita Dey, Subgroup Chair
- Sandra Connelly, Subgroup Deputy Chair
- Teresa Kauffman
- Michael Seablom
- Hema Sresty
- Ekaterina Verner
- John Gagorian
- Fred Brown

Inclusion & Culture Subgroup

- Elbert Cox, Subgroup Chair
- Thomas Feeley, Subgroup Deputy Chair
- Dana Bolles
- Susannah Darling
- Laura Delgado-Lopez
- Elizabeth Hook
- Lorenzo Pappas
- Joel Scott
- Jean Wolfe

Recruitment, Hiring, Retention Subgroup

- Nicole Rayl, Subgroup Chair
- Rachele Cocks, Subgroup Deputy Chair
- Sangeeta Malhorta
- Patricia Knezek
- Jonathan Rall
- Meagan Thompson
- Linda Timucin
- Jeffrey Gramling
- Maudood Khan
- Denise Hill

Research & Analysis Subgroup

- Kevin Reath, Subgroup Chair
- Delia Santiago-Matarese, Subgroup Deputy Chair
- Amanda Nahm
- Amy Uyen Truong
- Kathleen Baynes
- Daniel Evans
- Keith Gaddis
- Hashima Hasan
- Quang Viet-Nguyen

Science Engagement

- Kirsten Petree, Subgroup Chair
- Kelly Korreck
- Kevin Sato
- Nancy Searby
- Mary Sladek
- Lisa Carnell
- Shobhana Gupta
- Yvonne Ivey Parker
- Shoshana Weider

LMI Support Team

- Jade Singleton (Departed 5/22)
- Kim Barnette
- Lakeisha Cooper
- Tiffany Kelly
- Ruth Starr
- Tracy Urman
- Ilana White

