

2023–2024



# UNITE

## PROGRESS REPORT



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# MESSAGES FROM THE PAST AND CURRENT UNITE CO-CHAIRS

## Message from the FY23–FY24 UNITE Co-Chairs

Dear Colleagues,

We are pleased to present the UNITE Progress Report for fiscal years 2023–2024, which describes UNITE’s accomplishments since the inaugural UNITE Progress Report published in October 2022. We have been privileged to lead this people-focused, data-driven initiative, interacting with a committed working group of more than 80 UNITE volunteers from across all 27 NIH Institutes and Centers.

As was stated when UNITE was publicly launched in February 2021, advancing racial and ethnic equity throughout the biomedical and behavioral research ecosystem is a marathon, not a sprint. These first three-plus years have been run at a sprint, yielding excellent outcomes, as detailed in this report.

At the heart of UNITE are our volunteers, who have generated ideas and activities that have advanced racial and ethnic equity in the NIH biomedical and behavioral research ecosystem. Without their dedication, the achievements outlined in this report would not have been feasible. They are a testament to our collective commitment to UNITE’s founding principles and the collaborative spirit and innovative mindset that define UNITE.

UNITE’s interventions between fiscal years 2023 and 2024 include the Common Fund [Health Disparities Transformation initiative](#) that led to the [Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society \(ComPASS\)](#); the new automated [Research Condition and Disease Category \(RCDC\) Minority Health and Health Disparities](#) categories, allowing more accuracy and transparency in research; efforts to foster an equitable environment within NIH, such as the [Emerging Talent Program](#); and the five new and enhanced [UNITE-Related Funding Opportunities](#)—with more to come.

To continue with the running metaphor, it is time for a new team to take the lead, pacing us on our marathon to advance equity for all. As of April 26, 2024, UNITE’s leadership transitioned to a new group of co-chairs, with Dr. Bernard remaining to support continuity. You will find the message from the new leadership team on the next page. Together, they will continue propelling UNITE’s momentum and broadening its reach.

Our thanks to everyone who has helped make UNITE’s progress possible. We are grateful for your contributions and commitment to UNITE and unreservedly pass the baton to the new co-chair team. We will continue to monitor and promote UNITE’s ideals. Each of us looks forward to further progress in this marathon to advance equity for all.

Sincerely,

Marie A. Bernard, M.D., Noni Byrnes, Ph.D., Alfred C. Johnson, Ph.D., and Larry A. Tabak, D.D.S, Ph.D.



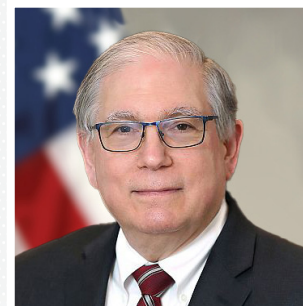
**Marie A. Bernard, M.D.**  
*Chief Officer for Scientific  
Workforce Diversity  
NIH Office of the Director*



**Noni H. Byrnes, Ph.D.**  
*Director  
NIH Center for Scientific Review*



**Alfred C. Johnson, Ph.D.**  
*Deputy Director For Management  
NIH Office of the Director*



**Lawrence A. Tabak,  
D.D.S, Ph.D.**  
*Principal Deputy Director  
NIH Office of the Director*

## Message from the Current UNITE Co-Chairs

Dear Colleagues,

We are honored to carry on UNITE's legacy. We are thankful for the work of Drs. Noni Byrnes, Alfred Johnson, Tara Schwetz (UNITE co-chair 2022–2023), and Larry Tabak, and the dedication of the many staff and volunteers who helped initiate UNITE during a critical period for amplifying diverse voices. Upholding and championing these voices remain central to our mission of ensuring UNITE's progress and equity in the scientific community.

As outlined in this progress report, UNITE's achievements demonstrate the power of innovation and collaboration in identifying and addressing any structural inequities that may exist within the biomedical and behavioral research enterprise.

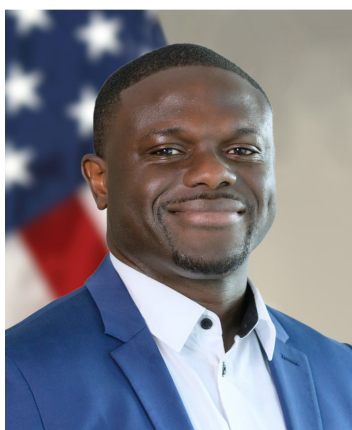
Driven by UNITE and other agencywide diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility activities, NIH will continue prioritizing initiatives that address minority health research and health disparities research and tackle identified disparities in the entire NIH workforce and the scientific workforce beyond NIH. Focusing on these crucial areas will promote change and contribute to an inclusive and equitable environment for individuals from diverse backgrounds and perspectives.

Thank you to everyone who has been involved in UNITE and contributed to its progress. We appreciate your engagement and look forward to working with you to achieve UNITE's mission and vision.

**Together, we are making a difference—because together, we're stronger.**

Sincerely,

Mohammed Aiyegbo, Ph.D., Camille Hoover, M.S.W., and Marie A. Bernard, M.D.



**Mohammed Aiyegbo, Ph.D.**

*Scientific Review Officer*  
National Institute of Allergy  
and Infectious Diseases



**Camille Hoover, M.S.W.**

*Executive Officer*  
National Institute of Diabetes and  
Digestive and Kidney Diseases



**Marie A. Bernard, M.D.**

*Chief Officer for Scientific  
Workforce Diversity*  
NIH Office of the Director



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report highlights UNITE's FY23–FY24 milestones across its four focus areas.



Exhibit 1: UNITE's Four Focus Areas

UNITE is [NIH's commitment to addressing any structural racism](#) that may exist within the biomedical and behavioral research ecosystem. It acts as a think tank to promote equity, generate bold ideas, and catalyze new actions. UNITE is people-focused and data-driven, with focus areas that address health disparities and minority health research, the internal NIH workforce, and the external biomedical and behavioral research workforce.

This report was developed in collaboration with the UNITE co-chairs; committees; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) partners. The information in this report comes from sources that include presentations at the [NIH Advisory Committee to the Director](#) meetings; peer-reviewed publications led by the UNITE co-chairs; [Co-Chairs' Corner posts](#); NIH Notices of Funding Opportunities; and Chief Officer for Scientific Workforce Diversity ([COSWD](#)) blogs. The inaugural [UNITE Progress Report for FY21–FY22](#) provides a comprehensive look at UNITE's origin and initial milestones and achievements.

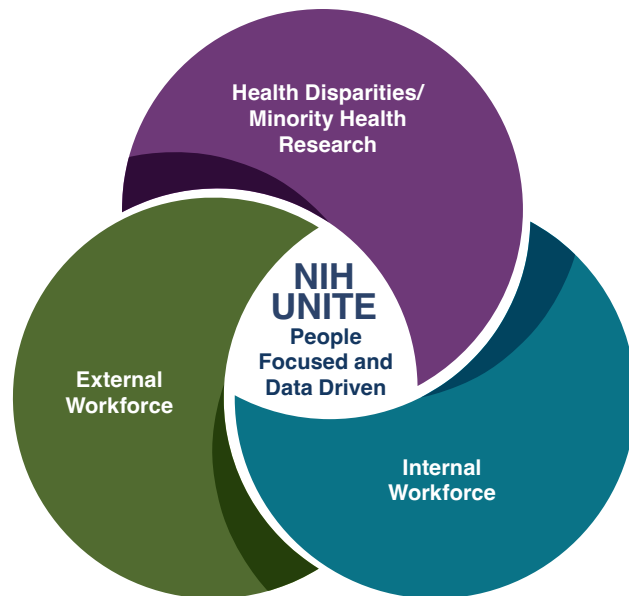



Exhibit 2: UNITE's Role Intersecting Health Disparities/Minority Health Research and Internal/External Workforce



FOCUS AREA 1:

**Elevating Health Disparities  
and Minority Health Research  
Across Institutes and Centers**

# FOCUS AREA 1: Elevating Health Disparities and Minority Health Research Across Institutes and Centers

## Progress Snapshot

ISSUE	ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE	RESULTING CHANGE
Community-led structural interventions are likely to accelerate progress in addressing health disparities.	UNITE helped foster the design of the FY23 <a href="#">Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society (ComPASS)</a> initiative via the NIH Common Fund.	By the end of FY23, 25 communities received awards to address problems they had identified. NIH committed \$140 million to advance changes within their settings.
Need to enhance accuracy and better distinguish minority health and health disparities research funding from workforce development and capacity-building funding.	UNITE worked with <a href="#">National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD)</a> , the NIH Office of Budget, and <a href="#">Research, Condition, and Disease Categorization (RCDC)</a> to develop and implement the automated categories.	NIH converted the two manual categories of minority health and health disparities in its RCDC reporting system into five automated categories to offer increased rigor, accuracy, and transparency in reporting NIH investments in these critical areas.
Need for an interdisciplinary approach to understand the impact of structural racism in biomedical and behavioral research.	In FY23, UNITE allocated funding for pilot projects to advance the principles of UNITE across NIH. UNITE is hosting a two-day workshop in FY24 titled, “Interdisciplinary Approaches to Understanding and Addressing Structural Racism and Health.”	UNITE’s actions are helping to improve understanding of the deleterious effects of structural racism on health outcomes and society as a whole.

[Focus Area 1](#) is dedicated to ensuring that NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs) prioritize health disparities and minority health research within clinical trials and human subject research. This critical focus area addresses health inequities and promotes research targeting the needs of underrepresented populations to ensure more inclusive and impactful scientific advancements.

This focus area was established in recognition of the stark health disparities highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic when communities of color experienced disproportionate morbidity and mortality. NIH felt it needed to augment the work led by the National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD) to address health disparities. UNITE’s work has been done in tandem with NIMHD and with the input and concurrence of NIMHD leadership.

## Growth in Funding Opportunities

Although not a direct UNITE outcome, there has been a notable increase in [NIH funding opportunities](#) related to minority health and health disparities, [from 18 in 2018 to 204 in 2023](#). This increase reflects NIH's ongoing commitment to advancing the understanding of minority health and health disparities and highlights NIH's proactive approach to addressing health inequities.

## NIH Common Fund's Community Partnerships to Advance Science for Society (ComPASS)

In FY21, shortly after UNITE was unveiled to the public, NIH announced the [Transformative Health Disparities Initiative supported by the Common Fund](#), a UNITE-led initiative to begin acting upon the health disparities vividly illustrated by the COVID-19 pandemic. By the end of FY21, 11 projects were announced, with a commitment of up to \$58 million over the next five years. However, there was a sense that this investment was not sufficient. Thus, over the next couple of years, an NIH-wide group developed the [ComPASS](#) initiative.

This new Common Fund effort, inspired by UNITE's recommendations, emphasizes the development of community-led health equity interventions, with a structure consisting of research hubs and a coordination center. By distributing awards across U.S. states and territories, ComPASS aims to drive impactful and sustainable advancements in health equity through collaborative and community-centered approaches.

By the end of FY23, 25 communities received awards to address problems they had identified. Working with academic centers and the ComPASS Coordination Center, NIH committed up to \$140 million over five years to advance changes within their settings. If the interventions are successful, there is the potential for an additional five years of support.

## Health Equity

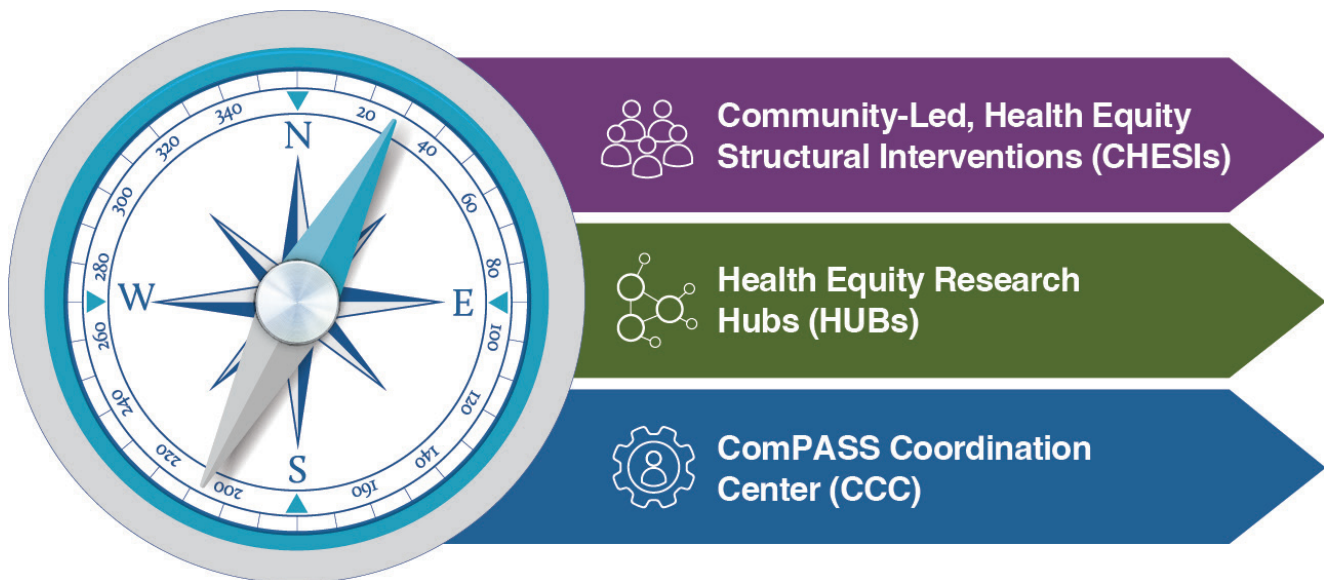


Exhibit 3: ComPASS Initiative Structure



## Enhanced Transparency and Accountability in Reporting of Health Disparities and Minority Health (RCDC) Research

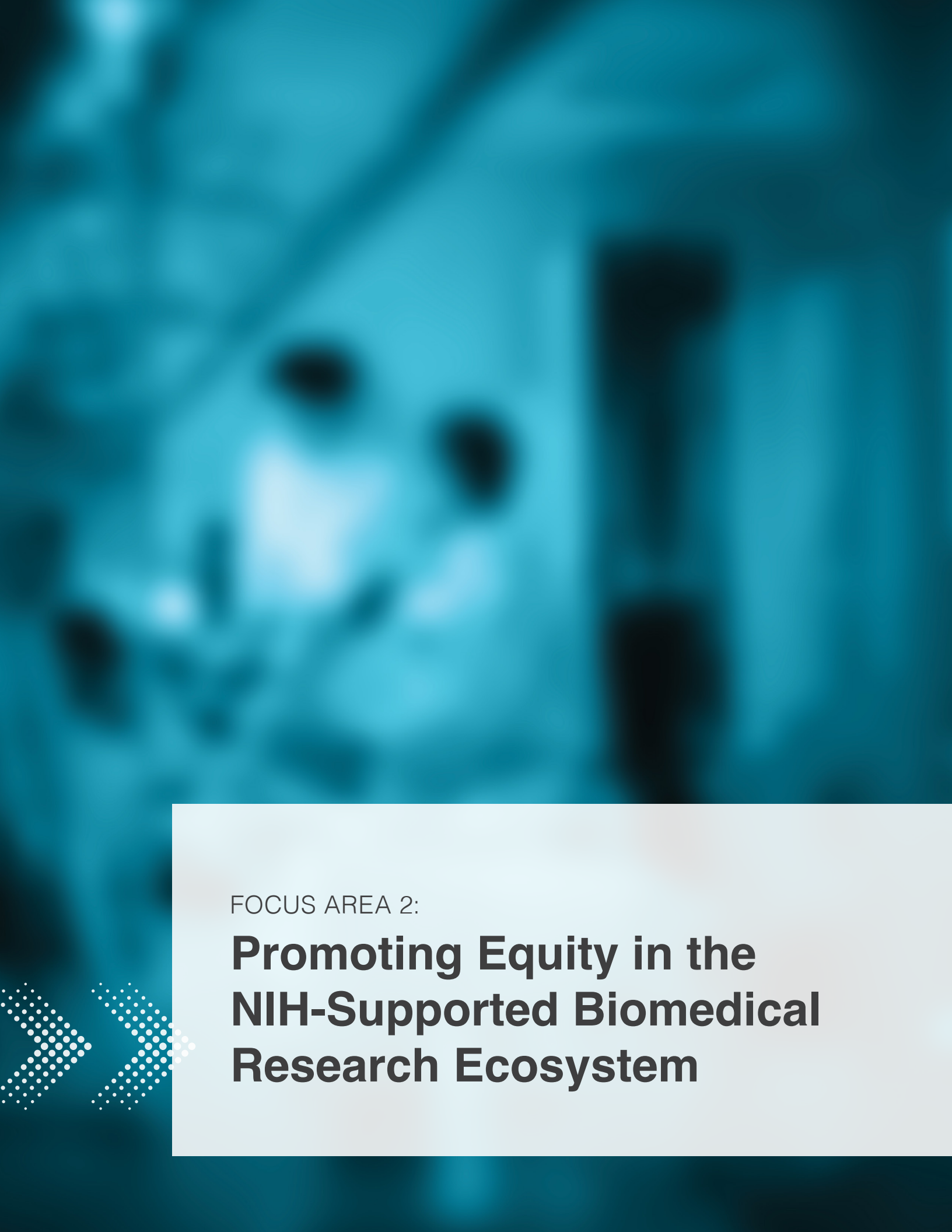
Over the past three years, UNITE has worked with the NIH Office of Budget, NIMHD, and [RCDC](#) to develop and implement automated RCDC categories to more accurately capture the health disparities and minority health research portfolios—and disentangle research activities from workforce and capacity-building activities to more clearly reflect these funding streams.

The changes in reporting for these categories and the associated changes to funding reflect more precise accounting. NIH converted the two manual categories of minority health and health disparities research into five automated categories to enhance accuracy and better distinguish research funding from workforce development and capacity-building funding. Shifting to automated categories also offers increased rigor, accuracy, and analytical capability (both funded and unfunded applications are now categorized) and reduces staff burden, as manual coding is no longer part of the process.

## Interdisciplinary Collaborative Workshops on Innovative Research Approaches To Eliminate Health Disparities


In FY23 and FY24, UNITE sponsored two workshops for researchers and partners from diverse academic backgrounds, community-based organizations, other government agencies, and the private and nonprofit sectors to develop and evaluate novel research approaches toward eliminating any structural racism and health disparities that may exist.

Achieving this goal goes beyond the biomedical and behavioral model, requiring an interdisciplinary approach that supports and amplifies research in areas that NIH typically does not fund (e.g., historians, humanistic social sciences) and the perspectives of scholars from diverse backgrounds, including those from underrepresented groups. Such research can contribute to informing structural and policy-focused research seeking to understand and eliminate health disparities. Building on the extensive social science literature on structural racism, the focus of the June 2024 workshop is to bring together diverse scholars with expertise in criminal justice, employment, environment, health, housing, and social media to discuss addressing health disparities.



FOCUS AREA 2:

**Promoting Equity in the  
NIH-Supported Biomedical  
Research Ecosystem**



## FOCUS AREA 2: Promoting Equity in the NIH-Supported Biomedical Research Ecosystem

### Progress Snapshot

ISSUE	ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE	RESULTING CHANGE
Need to ensure that diverse scientific talent is nurtured, recognized, and supported across all groups.	NIH executed the <a href="#">Faculty Institutional Recruitment for Sustainable Transformation (FIRST) program</a> .	NIH committed to 15 cohorts across the country, with the third and final FIRST cohorts announced in July 2023.
Need for expanded programs to enhance diversity of perspectives in science.	In FY23, UNITE led the development of four funding opportunities to promote equity in the research ecosystem.	The impact of the <a href="#">funding opportunities</a> will be seen with the publication of final FY24 funding numbers in RePORTER with the release of the President's FY25 budget.
Ensure that NIH staff engage with applicants and grantees in an inclusive, equitable, and respectful manner.	NIH developed the Program Officer/Scientific Review Officer Training for Inclusive and Equitable Interactions with Applicants and Grantees.	The new training will enhance the quality and integrity of the grant review and management processes.
Need to support students from diverse backgrounds, including from groups underrepresented in the biomedical and behavioral sciences as they may experience barriers to advancement leading to persistent underrepresentation of diverse perspectives in the scientific workforce.	NIH expanded the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS)-led <a href="#">Science Education Partnership Awards (SEPA)</a> , with a focus on K-12 STEM, to capture the interests of students from diverse backgrounds.	SEPA grew in FY23 with 19 Institutes, Centers, and Offices (ICOs) signed on to the funding opportunity.
Research-Active Institutions (see definition on page 12) may find it difficult to navigate available NIH funding opportunities.	In FY23, COSWD launched the <a href="#">Engagement and Access for Research-Active Institutions (EARA)</a> initiative, targeting outreach to rural institutions in Institutional Development Awards states, historically Black colleges and universities, TCUs, and minority-serving institutions, in keeping with the CHIPS and Science Act.	An FY24 pilot project aims to build relationships between NIH and approximately 50 RAIs enhancing their ability to navigate and access NIH resources and funding opportunities.

ISSUE	ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE	RESULTING CHANGE
Need to promote the integrity of the review process for grants, proposals, or research submissions within the NIH framework.	In FY23, NIH expanded the Center for Scientific Review-initiated Review Integrity and Bias Awareness Training as a mandatory requirement for all NIH reviewers.	The training fosters evaluations that minimize potential biases and sustain the quality and credibility of the review process.
Institutions are not sufficiently incentivized to prioritize DEIA as a foundation of their operations.	NIH initiated the <a href="#">DEIA Prize Competition</a> .	NIH awarded a total of \$1 million in prizes to 10 institutions in January 2024.
Need to enhance diversity within the academic biomedical and behavioral research workforce.	<a href="#">Maximizing Opportunities for Scientific and Academic Independent Careers (MOSAIC)</a> , led by <a href="#">NIGMS</a> , was developed to enhance diverse perspectives among faculty in biomedical and behavioral science.	<a href="#">MOSAIC awarded more than 130 K99/R00s</a> between FY21 and FY23.

[Focus Area 2](#) aligns with UNITE’s mission to prioritize equity in the NIH-supported biomedical and behavioral research ecosystem. This focus area is dedicated to advancing initiatives that foster an inclusive and equitable biomedical and behavioral research enterprise and promote diverse perspectives as integral components of it.

### Faculty Institutional Recruitment for Sustainable Transformation (FIRST)

In keeping with the spirit of UNITE and the goals of Focus Area 2, in FY21, the NIH Common Fund launched the [FIRST program](#), with a commitment of up to \$241 million over 10 years.

FIRST supports extramural institutions in building a self-reinforcing community of scientists by recruiting a critical mass of early-career faculty committed to inclusive excellence. FIRST also seeks to positively impact faculty development, retention, progression, and promotion, as well as the development of inclusive and sustainable environments. NIH announced the third and final FIRST cohorts in July 2023. Together, the 15 FIRST cohorts will support approximately 180 early-career faculty nationwide.

## FIRST Program Structure



Exhibit 4: FIRST Structure

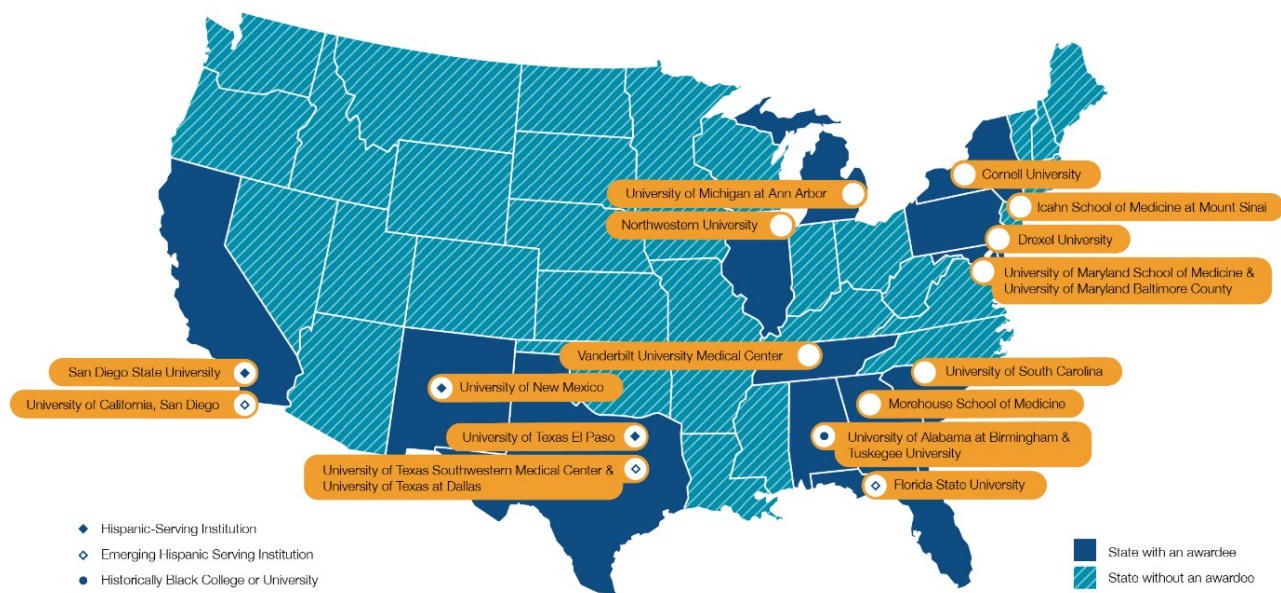


Exhibit 5: FIRST Distribution Map

## UNITE-Related Funding Opportunities

UNITE led the development and enhancement of several funding opportunities in FY23. The full impact of these will be seen with the publication of final FY24 funding numbers in [RePORTER](#) with the release of the President’s FY25 budget. These include:

- **Assessment of Climate at Institutions (ACT) Award** (RC2, [PAR-24-038](#)). This program solicits applications to conduct institutional climate assessments using validated survey instruments and to develop action plans for positive change in faculty recruitment, hiring, retention, and advancement. By promoting awareness and understanding of diverse perspectives within institutions, ACT contributes to the broader goals of UNITE. As of this writing, eight ICOs have partnered on ACT.
- **Instrumentation Grant Program for Resource-Limited Institutions** (RLI-S10, [PAR-23-138](#)). This program includes 16 IC participants and aims to provide support to institutions with limited resources, fostering diversity by enabling these institutions to participate more fully in research activities.
- **Research with Activities Related to Diversity (ReWARD)** ([PAR-23-122](#)). With 21 ICs participating, ReWARD enhances the breadth and geographical location of research and research-related activities that NIH supports. The program funds the health-related research of scientists who significantly contribute to DEIA efforts and do not have current NIH research project grant funding. ReWARD was designed to offset what is often perceived as a “tax” for taking leadership in efforts to advance DEIA. This R01 is a unique opportunity for NIH to recognize those scientists for their valuable contributions.
- **STrengthening Research Opportunities for NIH Grants (STRONG)** (UC2, [PAR-23-144](#)). STRONG was developed to enable resource-limited institutions (average of \$25 million or less in NIH funding in the prior three years) to assess their research strengths and needs and develop a plan to become more research intensive. With 18 ICOs supporting the effort, the initial release of this solicitation received an excellent response.
- **Science Education Partnership Award (SEPA)** ([PAR-23-137](#)). Under UNITE’s leadership, the [NIGMS-led SEPA program](#) was expanded, with 19 ICOs signed on to the funding opportunity. Expanded support of this K-12 STEM education program was deemed significant to UNITE’s goals, as science identity is often developed as early as middle school. Capturing the minds and imaginations of youth may offset the progressive loss of diverse perspectives that occurs along the path to becoming an NIH-funded researcher.

## Other UNITE-Inspired Activities

### Engagement and Access for Research-Active Institutions (EARA)

The [EARA](#) initiative aims to increase awareness and address access barriers that RAIs encounter in enhancing research capacity and infrastructure, accelerating research progress, and addressing disparities in research opportunities and outcomes. NIH defines RAIs in this context as institutions that have a documented mission to serve populations underrepresented in biomedical and behavioral research; award degrees in the health professions or the sciences related to health or in STEM fields, including social and behavioral sciences; and have received an average of no more than \$25 million (total costs) of NIH Research Project Grant support for the past three fiscal years.

The [EARA webpage](#) provides information relevant to RAIs and those interested in issues related to RAIs. NIH developed EARA in response to a recommendation from UNITE.

### Review Integrity and Bias Awareness Training Requirement

NIH expanded the Center for Scientific Review-developed Review Integrity and Bias Awareness Training in FY23, making it a mandatory requirement for all NIH peer reviewers. This training is intended to promote the integrity of the review process for grants, proposals, or research submissions within the NIH framework. Through this training, NIH seeks to foster fair and objective evaluations, minimize potential biases, and maintain the quality and credibility of the review process. This effort aligns with broader initiatives across the scientific community to promote transparency, accountability, and ethical conduct in research and peer review.

### Program Officer/Scientific Review Officer Training

NIH's Program Officer/Scientific Review Officer Training for Inclusive and Equitable Interactions with Applicants and Grantees helps ensure that these officers engage with applicants and grantees in an inclusive, equitable, and respectful manner. By providing this training, NIH aims to advance the quality and integrity of its grant review and management processes, contributing to equitable outcomes in research funding and support.

### NIH DEIA Prize Competition

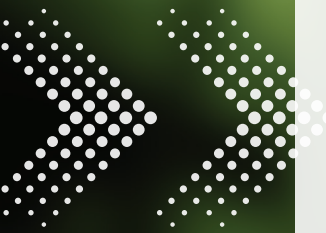
The [NIH Institutional Excellence in DEIA in Biomedical and Behavioral Research Prize Competition](#) recognized innovative efforts to advance DEIA within institutions of higher education. Criteria for the competition required institutions to provide data that demonstrated impact, and thus focused retrospectively. By acknowledging initiatives that promoted DEIA principles in the past, the generalized principles from the competition were intended to inspire progress and foster greater equity and inclusion. NIH announced the prize recipients in January 2024, awarding a total of \$1 million to 10 institutions.

### Maximizing Opportunities for Scientific and Academic Independent Careers (MOSAIC)

In keeping with the spirit of UNITE, [MOSAIC](#)—led by [NIGMS](#)—was developed to enhance diverse perspectives among faculty in biomedical and behavioral science. With 23 ICOs participating, [MOSAIC awarded more than 130 K99/R00s between FY21 and FY23](#), a success rate of approximately 50%. About 75% of MOSAIC scholars are women, with around 70% from underrepresented groups and with 42 scholars beginning or accepting faculty positions.



FOCUS AREA 3:



# **Promoting Equity in the Internal NIH Workforce**

## FOCUS AREA 3: Promoting Equity in the Internal NIH Workforce

### Progress Snapshot

ISSUE	ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE	RESULTING CHANGE
Scarcity of opportunities for first-year medical students from diverse backgrounds and communities.	NIH launched the <a href="#">Medical Student Opportunities for Advanced Research (M-SOAR)</a> initiative in 2023 in partnership with the Office of Intramural Training and Education (OITE).	NIH selected 23 medical students to join the program, with 16 participating. M-SOAR received financial support from OITE and the UNITE Pilot Project Fund during FY23.
Scarcity of applicants from underrepresented populations who apply for NIH job vacancies.	UNITE recommended sharing job opportunities on the listserv for federal affinity groups.	By reaching out to federal affinity groups for recruitment purposes, more diverse applicant pools are expected.
Need for training for staff at the GS-11 level and below to foster advancement.	NIH developed a career development opportunity for staff at the GS-11 and lower levels.	NIH launched the <a href="#">Emerging Talent Program</a> in FY24 to advance career development opportunities and foster inclusivity within the agency.
Disparities in nominations for NIH Director's Awards by workforce category.	NIH established a task force to recommend changes to the NIH Director's Awards.	In FY23, NIH modified the <a href="#">NIH Director's Awards</a> to promote inclusivity and broader opportunities for recognition of work contributing to the NIH mission.

[Focus Area 3](#) aims to promote and sustain an equitable workplace and organizational culture within NIH.

This focus area is dedicated to fostering a work environment where all employees feel valued, respected, and supported. Through ongoing efforts to advance equity and promote a culture of inclusivity, Focus Area 3 plays a crucial role in promoting and sustaining an equitable and empowering NIH workplace.



## Medical Student Opportunities for Advanced Research (M-SOAR) Program

NIH launched the [M-SOAR](#) initiative in 2023 in partnership with the Office of Intramural Training and Education (OITE). M-SOAR was open to first-year medical students dedicated to incorporating clinical research and translational methods into their future careers. Of 88 applicants, NIH selected 23 to join the program, with 16 participating. M-SOAR received financial support from OITE and the UNITE Pilot Project Fund during FY23.

## Listserv for Federal Affinity Groups


The listserv for federal affinity groups for NIH vacancy announcements was a UNITE recommendation adopted by the NIH Office of Human Resources to broaden and increase the pool of applicants from underrepresented populations who apply for NIH job vacancies. This initiative aims to diversify applicant pools for employment opportunities within the NIH workforce by reaching out to federal affinity groups for recruitment purposes.

## Career Development Training

To advance career development opportunities and foster inclusivity within NIH, the agency launched the [Emerging Talent Program](#) in FY24. The program targets GS-5 to GS-11 staff members to promote advancement to higher career levels. The program enrolled two pilot cohorts of 30 participants each, representing 16 ICs.

## NIH Director's Awards

NIH has worked to rectify disparities in [NIH Director's Awards](#) to promote inclusivity and equal access to opportunities. Actions included reviewing the language used in the award program, introducing new award categories focused on expanding opportunity and access, and providing more direction on the scoring rubric and guidance to nominees.



FOCUS AREA 4:

**Improving the Accuracy  
and Transparency of  
Racial and Ethnic Equity Data**

## FOCUS AREA 4: Improving the Accuracy and Transparency of Racial and Ethnic Equity Data

### Progress Snapshot

ISSUE	ACTIVITIES TO ADDRESS ISSUE	RESULTING CHANGE
Lack of robust, recent baseline data on scientists' needs and experiences pertaining to racial and ethnic equity.	UNITE conducted 14 listening sessions with the extramural community to understand needs and priorities; over 1,300 people attended.	In FY23, UNITE released the <a href="#">External Listening Sessions Report</a> , which compiled input gathered from the 14 listening sessions.
Need to improve transparency and accountability in communicating UNITE progress to partners, stakeholders, and the public.	<p>UNITE collaborated with the Office of Extramural Research (OER) to improve the transparency of the <a href="#">OER data dashboard</a> and the <a href="#">UNITE website's data hub</a>.</p> <p>UNITE committees analyzed and contributed to questions for the <a href="#">2023 NIH Workplace Civility and Equity Survey</a> findings to gain deeper insights into the perspectives of the NIH workforce.</p>	UNITE's actions led to publicly available information on aggregated facts and figures regarding diversity-, equity-, and inclusion-related data and analyses from NIH.

[Focus Area 4](#) is dedicated to improving the accuracy and transparency of racial and ethnic equity data in biomedical and behavioral research. By enhancing data collection methods and increasing transparency in reporting, this focus area seeks to identify and address any disparities and systemic biases that may exist within funding and job opportunities supported by NIH. Through these efforts, Focus Area 4 aims to promote a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of the impact of racial and ethnic factors in biomedical and behavioral research and the workforce, further advancing equity in science.

## UNITE External Listening Sessions Report

The UNITE [External Listening Sessions Report](#) compiled input gathered from UNITE’s 14 external listening sessions, reflecting participants’ diverse perspectives and insights. The report provides a comprehensive overview of the key themes, challenges, and recommendations voiced during these sessions and includes essential qualitative data that informs the development and implementation of strategies to advance health equity and address health disparities. By incorporating the perspectives of various stakeholders, the report helps foster transparency, inclusivity, and collaboration within the realm of biomedical and behavioral research. This report augments the data gathered from the 2021 UNITE Request for Information and other data-gathering activities.

## Internal Data Gathering and Analyses

UNITE committees analyzed and contributed to questions for the [2023 NIH Workplace Civility and Equity Survey](#) findings to gain deeper insights into the perspectives of the NIH workforce. This analysis aims to enhance understanding and address any issues related to civility and equity within NIH.

## Fostering Transparency

UNITE proactively fosters transparency within NIH through various initiatives, such as collaborations with the OER, to improve the usefulness of the [OER data dashboard](#) and the [UNITE website’s data hub](#). As noted in the section on Focus Area 1, the automated health disparities/minority health research for RCDC promotes transparency in that research realm.

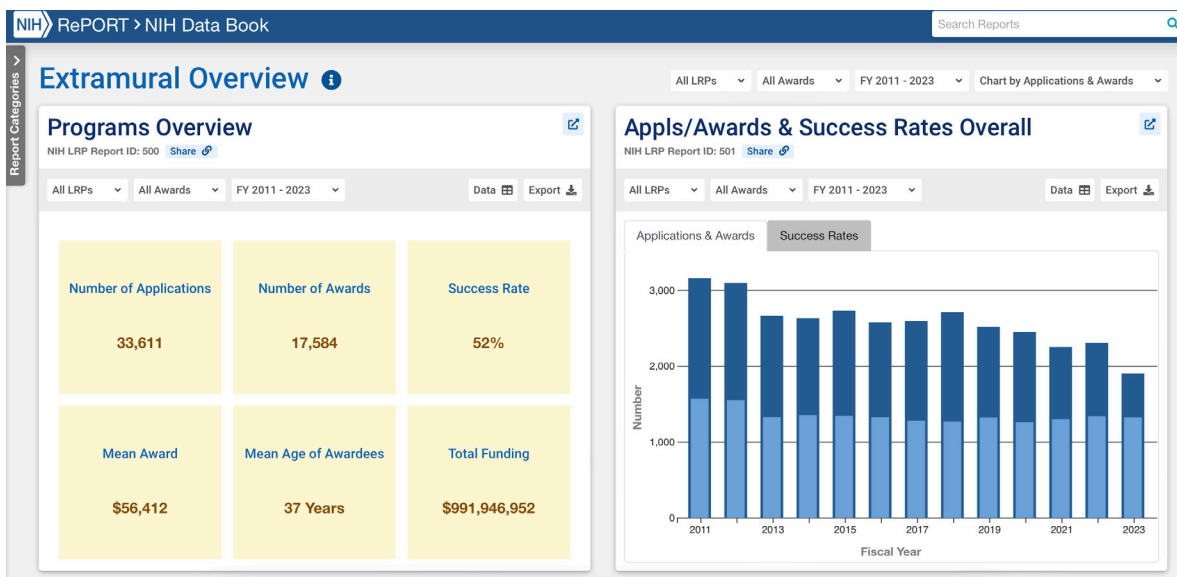


Exhibit 6: OER Data Dashboard



## WHAT'S NEXT FOR UNITE?

The progress outlined in this report represents UNITE's ongoing efforts to cultivate an inclusive biomedical and behavioral research enterprise. UNITE's commitment to being a driving force for transformation within NIH and the broader scientific community remains unwavering. Additional developments will be reported in future UNITE Progress Reports.

