

HEALTH RESEARCH ALLIANCE CONVENING ON BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

February 26, 2024

Hosted by the Doris Duke Foundation



The meeting will be held at the Doris Duke Foundation (444 Madison Ave, 10th Floor, New York, NY 10022).

Bullying, harassment, and toxic research environments can impact all members of the scientific community, including graduate students, early career researchers, and established tenured faculty. Biomedical researchers are more likely than the general population to experience depression and anxiety, in part because of these working conditions, with the COVID-19 pandemic further exacerbating many of these issues¹. Toxic research culture can manifest in many ways, such as professional misconduct, which includes both inappropriate behaviors and research misconduct². This convening will explore ways in which funders can prevent and address inappropriate behaviors, including bullying, harassment, and discrimination, both independently and in partnership with other sectors. Research misconduct, while an important topic with harmful consequences for the scientific community, is outside of the focus of this convening.

February 26, 2024 | Monday – Brief Agenda

10:00 – 10:30am ET	Welcome
10:30 – 11:15am ET	Making Change Through Cross-Sector Partnerships
11:15am – 11:30am ET	Break
11:30am – 12:45pm ET	Lessons Learned and Recommendations from Existing Policies Addressing Misconduct, Bullying, and Harassment
12:45pm – 1:45pm ET	Lunch
1:45pm – 3:45pm ET	Working Session: Developing a Theory of Change
3:45 – 4:00pm ET	Closing

Table of Contents

[Session Information and Speaker Biographies](#)

[Making Change Through Cross-Sector Partnerships](#)

[Lessons Learned and Recommendations from Existing Policies Addressing Misconduct, Bullying, and Harassment](#)

[Working Session: Developing a Theory of Change](#)

[Relevant Literature and Publications](#)

[Meeting Attendee List](#)

¹ Evans, T. M., Bira, L., Gastelum, J. B., Weiss, L. T. & Vanderford, N. L. Nature Biotechnol. 36, 282–284 (2018).

² Rayner C, Hoel H. A summary review of the literature relating to workplace bullying. J Appl Soc Psychology. 1997;7:181–191.

Session Information and Speaker Biographies

Making Change Through Cross-Sector Partnerships

Efforts to address long-standing cultural challenges, like bullying and harassment in research environments, often benefit from partnerships across sectors. Presenters will share recommendations and opportunities for nonprofit, non-governmental funders to form partnerships with other sectors to proactively support healthy and inclusive research environments, and address issues of bullying and harassment when they arise.

Moderator

Kevin Sia, PhD

Doris Duke Foundation, Program Officer for Medical Research

Presenters

Frazier Benya, PhD

National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine; Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

Dr. Frazier Benya is a Senior Program Officer at the National Academies, where she directs the Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education. In that role she brings together leaders from over 50 academic and research institutions and key stakeholders to collaboratively work toward and share targeted action on addressing and preventing sexual harassment. Since the Collaborative was formed in 2019, it has informed significant policy changes, released a series of publications for the higher education community, developed a first of its kind resource repository, and held bi-annual meetings that draw hundreds from across the landscape of higher education. Throughout Dr. Benya's career, her work has focused on ensuring that science, engineering, and medicine are ethical and socially responsible, both in their practice and in who gets to participate in the work. From 2016 to 2018, she served as the study director for the National Academies consensus study report Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. Prior to that, Dr. Benya worked with the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) on projects focused on improving and enhancing engineering ethics education and on analyzing the pathways engineers take from education to the workforce. Dr. Benya holds a B.A with honors in Science, Technology and Society from the University of Puget Sound, and a M.A. in Bioethics and Ph.D. in History of Science, Technology, and Medicine from the University of Minnesota. Dr. Benya was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Sciences in 2017.

Karen Salt, PhD

Manchester Metropolitan University, Professor of Culture, Place and Communities

UK Research and Innovation, Chair of the Forum for Tackling Bullying and Harassment in Research and Innovation

Professor Karen Salt specializes in collective governance, systems transformation and sustainable change. She is currently the Trusted Research and Innovation Portfolio Director within UK Research and Innovation (UKRI), the UK's largest public funder of research and innovation. She drives UKRI's cross-organisational efforts to support flourishing partnerships and collaborations by providing effective and sound policymaking. She has previously guided UKRI's work on research culture, including its work on behalf of the sector in preventing bullying and harassment. She co-convenes the UK Forum for Tackling Bullying and Harassment, a cross-sector body that brings together funders, universities, government agencies, unions, learned societies, industry partners and other representative groups with an interest in collaborating to bring about change.

As a sector leader, collaborator and active researcher focused on harnessing the power of place-based research and equitable community/university partnerships, Salt brings this expertise to her role as Professor of Culture, Place and Communities at Manchester Metropolitan University. With over 30 years of experience in inclusive policy-making and novel change-making, Salt continues to work closely with leaders across Government, academia, civil society and industry and contributes to numerous international initiatives focused on empowering communities.

(continued on next page)

Related Information and Resources

NASEM Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education

The Action Collaborative brings together leaders from academic and research institutions and key stakeholders to collaboratively work toward and share targeted action on addressing and preventing sexual harassment across all disciplines and among all people in higher education. It creates an active space where colleges, universities, and other research and training institutions move beyond basic legal compliance to evidence-based policies and practices for addressing and preventing all forms of sexual harassment and promoting a campus climate of civility and respect. The Action Collaborative has generated many reports, publications, and other work products that are available on the [Action Collaborative website](#). Some highlights include:

- [Brief Overview of the Action Collaborative](#)
- [Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education: Year Three Annual Report of Activities \(2022\)](#)
- [Sexual Harassment Collaborative Repository](#): Descriptions of the most significant, innovative actions that participating organizations in the Action Collaborative have taken
- [Report Brief on the 2018 Consensus Study on Sexual Harassment](#): Overview of the key research findings and recommendations

UKRI Forum for Tackling Bullying and Harassment in Research and Innovation

The Forum for Tackling Bullying and Harassment in Research and Innovation brings together funding, policy and regulatory organisations, both in the UK and internationally. The forum is a place for discussion, challenge and action, with all attending organisations committing to collective change for tackling bullying and harassment. The forum works to tackle and prevent bullying and harassment by collectively and collaboratively convening organisations and people, to galvanise cultural change and create healthy and safe world-class research and innovation environments. The forum aims to support system-level change by collaboratively working to explore, understand and share learnings and knowledge of practices for tackling bullying and harassment across the research and innovation landscape. [The forum's website](#) links to additional information and resources generated by the forum.

- [Bullying and harassment position statement](#)
- [Bullying and harassment evidence review](#)
- [Preventing harm in research](#): Key principles for safeguarding, and preventing and addressing bullying and harassment

Lessons Learned and Recommendations from Existing Policies Addressing Misconduct, Bullying, and Harassment

This session will highlight examples of policies that have been developed to address misconduct, bullying, and harassment in research environments. Presenters will share lessons learned and recommendations for funders to consider as they work to develop additional policies, practices, and resources to prevent or address similar behavior that may occur in the context of research that they fund. The session will also surface opportunities for cross-sector partnerships that would improve funders' abilities to prevent or address misconduct, bullying, and harassment.

Moderator

Joe Cotter

American Cancer Society, Research Engagement Manager

Presenters

Rhonda Davis

National Science Foundation, Head of Office of Equity and Civil Rights

Rhonda Davis is the Head of the National Science Foundation's Office of Equity & Civil Rights. She has over 30 years of experience as a change agent in the Federal government. She joined NSF in 2010 from the Department of Agriculture's Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights where she served in several leadership positions. She is a recent recipient of the 2022 Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious Executive. Her experience in establishing and managing nondiscrimination and

diversity programs has enabled her to make significant contributions to NSF's very important goal to excel as a federal science agency with a diverse, engaged and high-performing workforce. She is known for coaching leaders to create fertile space to confront the discomfort of conflict resolution. She holds a Masters of Science degree in Agricultural Economics from North Carolina Agriculture and Technical State University and a Bachelor of Science degree in Agricultural Economics from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. She has completed numerous executive education programs and is an International Coaching Federation certified leadership coach.

Patricia Valdez, PhD

National Institutes of Health Office of Extramural Research, Chief Extramural Research Integrity Officer

Dr. Patricia Valdez serves as the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Chief Extramural Research Integrity Officer in the NIH Office of Extramural Research (OER) where she and her team handle allegations involving NIH-supported extramural research, including harassment, research misconduct, peer review integrity, and foreign interference. Prior to joining the OER, Dr. Valdez was a Staff Scientist in the NIAID Laboratory of Clinical Infectious Disease and the Manager of Publication Ethics for the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB). Dr. Valdez received her Ph.D. in Molecular and Cell Biology from the University of California, Berkeley and carried out her Postdoctoral training in the Immunology Discovery Department at Genentech, where she focused on both basic research and pre-clinical drug development.

Belinda Orland

American Heart Association, National Senior Director, Research and Grants Administration

Belinda Orland is a National Senior Director of Research and Grants Administration at the American Heart Association. She has been with the AHA for over 20 years. She works with Research Misconduct policies and issues and managed the task force that created the American Heart Association Research Committee Sexual and Gender-Based Harassment Task Force report in 2022.

Stefania Forner, PhD

Alzheimer's Association, Director, Medical & Scientific Relations

Stefania Forner, Ph.D., is Director, Medical & Scientific Relations at the Alzheimer's Association. She provides leadership to the International Research Grant Program (IRGP), which funds investigations to advance our understanding of Alzheimer's disease, identify new treatment strategies, improve care for people with dementia, and further our knowledge of brain health and disease prevention. She also oversees numerous fellowship programs, including the Zenith Fellows Program and the Global Health Leaders Program alongside the Global Brain Health Institute. Dr. Forner holds a Ph.D. and M.Sc. in Pharmacology from the Federal University of Santa Catarina, Brazil. Dr. Forner did her postdoctoral training at University of California, Irvine.

Related Information and Resources

National Science Foundation Awardee Civil Rights Compliance Program

The National Science Foundation (NSF) does not tolerate discrimination or harassment of any kind, within the Foundation, at awardee organizations, field sites, or anywhere NSF-funded science and education are conducted. The Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR) is responsible for the NSF Awardee Civil Rights Compliance Program and is committed to ensuring NSF awardees can learn and explore science without having to tolerate discrimination or harassment.

- [National Science Foundation Awardee Civil Rights Compliance Program](#)
- [Organizational Notification of Harassment Form](#): Web form to submit a notification of a PI's or co-PI's placement on administrative leave or a finding of harassment to the National Science Foundation's Office of Equity and Civil Rights

National Institutes of Health: Supporting a Safe and Respectful Workplace at Institutions that Receive NIH Funding

NIH supports safe and respectful work environments that are free from harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination, or other forms of inappropriate conduct that can result in a hostile work environment. NIH expects

recipient institutions to have policies and practices in place that foster a harassment-free environment. The NIH's website outlines expectations and NIH requirements for recipient institutions to notify NIH when individuals identified as PD/PI or other Senior/Key personnel in an NIH notice of award are removed from their position or are otherwise disciplined by the recipient institution due to concerns about harassment, bullying, retaliation or hostile working conditions.

- [Supporting a Safe and Respectful Workplace at Institutions that Receive NIH Funding](#)
- [NIH Process for Handling Allegations of Harassment on an NIH-Funded Project at a Recipient Institution](#)

American Heart Association

The American Heart Association has incorporated language into their award terms and conditions and into their Award Guide that address discrimination and harassment.

- [Award Terms and Conditions language about unlawful harassment](#)
- [AHA Award Guide](#): Section II.H.IV - Standards On Falsification Of Scientific Data, Plagiarism And Scientific Misconduct; AHA Funded Scientist Suspected Of Violation

Working Session: Developing a Theory of Change

Attendees will work together to develop a Theory of Change that will guide future actions to prevent and address bullying and harassment, including generating ideas about possible goals, outcomes, and activities that funders could pursue as a collective and/or in partnership with other sectors.

Facilitators

Kim Lezak, PhD

Health Resources in Action, Managing Director of Biomedical Research Grantmaking

Kristen Mueller, PhD

Arthritis Foundation, Vice President of Autoimmune Arthritis Research

Related Information and Resources

During the session, attendees will use [this Google Slides presentation](#) (short URL: rb.gy/nlzxbn) to collaborate and document their work (sharing permissions on the file will be edited shortly before the convening to allow all attendees to edit the file; the file may not be accessible before February 26).

Relevant Literature and Publications

Personal Narratives

Finding a path forward after experiencing academic bullying. (2021, March 11). ecrLife. <https://ecrlife.org/finding-a-path-forward-after-experiencing-academic-bullying/>

'It's devastating.' Academic bullying investigator shares insights into a pernicious problem. (n.d.). Retrieved January 2, 2024, from <https://www.science.org/content/article/it-s-devastating-academic-bullying-investigator-shares-insights-pernicious-problem>

"My PhD broke me"—Bullying in academia and a call to action. (2019, November 5). ecrLife. <https://ecrlife.org/bullying-in-academia-theses-from-victims-and-a-call-to-action/>

Rosenberg, A. (2021, June 26). Questions of a canceled whistle-blower. KevinMD.com. <https://www.kevinmd.com/2021/06/questions-of-a-canceled-whistle-blower.html>

Rosenberg, A. (2019, April 18). We, Too. Pallimed: A Hospice & Palliative Medicine Blog. <https://www.pallimed.org/2019/04/we-too.html>

Research Reports

Chirikov, I., Soria, K. M, Horgos, B., & Jones-White, D. (2020). [Undergraduate and Graduate Students' Mental Health During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#). UC Berkeley: Center for Studies in Higher Education. Retrieved from <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/80k5d5hw>

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- Moran H, Karlin L, Lauchlan E et al. [Understanding Research Culture: What researchers think about the culture they work in](https://doi.org/10.12688/wellcomeopenres.15832.1) [version 1; peer review: 1 approved, 1 approved with reservations]. *Wellcome Open Res* 2020, 5:201. doi.org/10.12688/wellcomeopenres.15832.1
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- Slater, A. C., Thomas, A. A., Quan, L., Bell, S., Bradford, M. C., Walker-Harding, L., & Rosenberg, A. R. (2022). [Gender Discrimination and Sexual Harassment in a Department of Pediatrics](https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2021-055933). *Pediatrics*, 150(6), e2021055933. <https://doi.org/10.1542/peds.2021-055933>
- Valantine, H. A., Le Fauve, C. E., Morris, K. A., & Riley, W. T. (2022). [Ending Sexual Harassment in Science: Designing and Administering a Survey That Can Lead to an Improved Organizational Climate](https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000004491). *Academic Medicine: Journal of the Association of American Medical Colleges*, 97(3), 364–369. <https://doi.org/10.1097/ACM.0000000000004491>

Editorials

- Douglas, P. S. (2023). [Disrespectful Conduct in the Medical Profession: We Have Met the Enemy and They Are Us](https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2023.3694). *JAMA*, 329(21), 1829–1831. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2023.3694>
- Hall, S. (2023). [A mental-health crisis is gripping science—Toxic research culture is to blame](https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-023-01708-4). *Nature*, 617(7962), 666–668. <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-023-01708-4>
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- Wosen, J. (2023, June 6). [Academia’s postdoc system is teetering, imperiling efforts to diversify life sciences](https://www.statnews.com/2023/06/06/postdoc-system-teetering-imperiling-life-sciences-diversity/). *STAT*. <https://www.statnews.com/2023/06/06/postdoc-system-teetering-imperiling-life-sciences-diversity/>

Meeting Attendees

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Convening Planning Committee

We are grateful to the planning committee for the time and effort they spent organizing this convening.

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Escobar Alvarez, Sindy; Doris Duke Foundation; Program Director for Medical Research

Forner, Stefania; Alzheimer's Association; Director, Medical & Scientific Relations

Franko, Maryrose; Health Research Alliance; Executive Director

Garcia, Jamie; Health Research Alliance; Intern

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