Dear members of the Weizmann Institute of Science community,

The goal of the Diversity and Inclusion Office at the Weizmann Institute of Science is to promote a research and teaching environment that enables equal opportunities for all, regardless of religion, race, gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or disability.

In anticipation of the UN World Day for Cultural Diversity, which will take place on May 21, 2022, I would like to share with you the main principles of diversity and inclusion that we are promoting at the Weizmann Institute of Science, along with initiatives that are already being implemented. Our basic outlook is based on the following three pillars:

**Diversity**

The first principle is the expansion of diversity on campus, based on the understanding that excellent science is diverse science.

The Institute is already comprised of students, post-docs, and faculty members from fifty different countries. In addition, we are promoting a wide range of initiatives with the goal of improving the representation of minorities and increasing the number of students from these populations, to reflect the colorful tapestry of Israeli society. As such, we’ve taken the following initiatives:

* Analysis of data collected at the Institute over the past decade, characterizing various populations and mapping their representation on campus;
* Formulating an informational campaign to encourage Arab students to enroll in studies at the Institute;
* Initiating collaborations with academic colleges from the geographic and social periphery;
* Providing assistance to the Gender Equality Team (GET) at the Israeli Institute for the Gender Equality in Education, by analyzing data, identifying key challenges, and formulating recommendations that will lead to a more equitable integration of female students at scientific staff at the Institute.

**Integration and Inclusion**

The second principle is to create a sense of integration, inclusion, security, and belonging for everyone on campus.

Studies have shown that it is not sufficient to bring students, faculty, and employees from diverse groups together in one place. We must also address the relevant differences between members of the various populations at the Institute and provide a safe space where everyone can thrive. Towards this end we have:

* Conducted a survey among all students at the Institute in order to map challenges in this area;
* Created an academic calendar that includes the national holidays and major holidays of all the various religions;
* Offered an Arabic language course to everyone on campus;
* Institutionalized activities of Achva, the LGBTI Student Association in Israel;
* Established a new award to encourage activities that promote diversity and inclusion among all students.

**Equal Opportunities**

The third pillar is a conscious and deliberate effort to promote equal opportunities for all. Initiatives that have been implemented to promote this goal include:

* A preparatory workshop for scientists on the admissions committees for students and faculty, aimed at preventing unconscious biases;
* A series of lectures and tours regarding diverse populations in Israeli society (haredi, Ethiopian, Arab) to encourage personal contacts and dialogue;
* A summer program providing an opportunity for undergraduate students from diverse populations to become familiar with the Institute and to participate in research groups.

Creating a diverse campus is a complex process that depends on a meaningful partnership between all the relevant entities. Therefore, we are working in full cooperation with the Human Resources Division, the Division for the Promotion of Gender Equity, the International Office, the Commissioner for the Prevention of Sexual Harassment, the Communications Department and, of course, the Institute’s administration and the Dean, who are leading and supporting all of these initiatives.

Alongside this ongoing work, there are still many challenges before us that we have not yet succeeded in addressing, and many goals to fulfill. I invite each and every one of you to contact me with ideas, thoughts or initiatives that you would be willing to promote, and ways you can take an active part in creating a more diverse campus.

With best regards,

Dr. Meytal Eran Jona

Head of the Diversification and Inclusion Office

Weitzman Institution of Science