

NCI's Commitment to Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility and anti-Harassment

*LeeAnn Bailey, MD, PhD
Division of Cancer Biology
New Grantee Workshop*



“To those individuals in the biomedical research enterprise who have endured disadvantages due to structural racism, I am truly sorry. NIH is committed to instituting new ways to support diversity, equity, and inclusion, and identifying and dismantling any policies and practices at our own agency that may harm our workforce and our science.”

— Francis S. Collins, M.D., Ph.D., NIH Director



[NIH Director Statement, March 1, 2021](#)

[NCI Director Comments, December 6, 2022](#) (timestamp 16:15)

The NIH UNITE Initiative



- U** Understanding stakeholder experiences through listening and learning
- N** New research on health disparities/minority health/health equity
- I** Improving the NIH Culture and Structure for Equity, Inclusion, and Excellence
- T** Transparency, communication, and accountability with our internal and external stakeholders
- E** Extramural Research Ecosystem: Changing Policy, Culture, and Structure to Promote Workforce Diversity

Four Focus Areas of UNITE

UNITE's foci as statements

FOCUS
AREA 1

Elevating health disparities and minority health research across institutes and centers

FOCUS
AREA 2

Promoting equity in the NIH-supported biomedical research ecosystem

FOCUS
AREA 3

Promoting equity in the internal NIH workforce

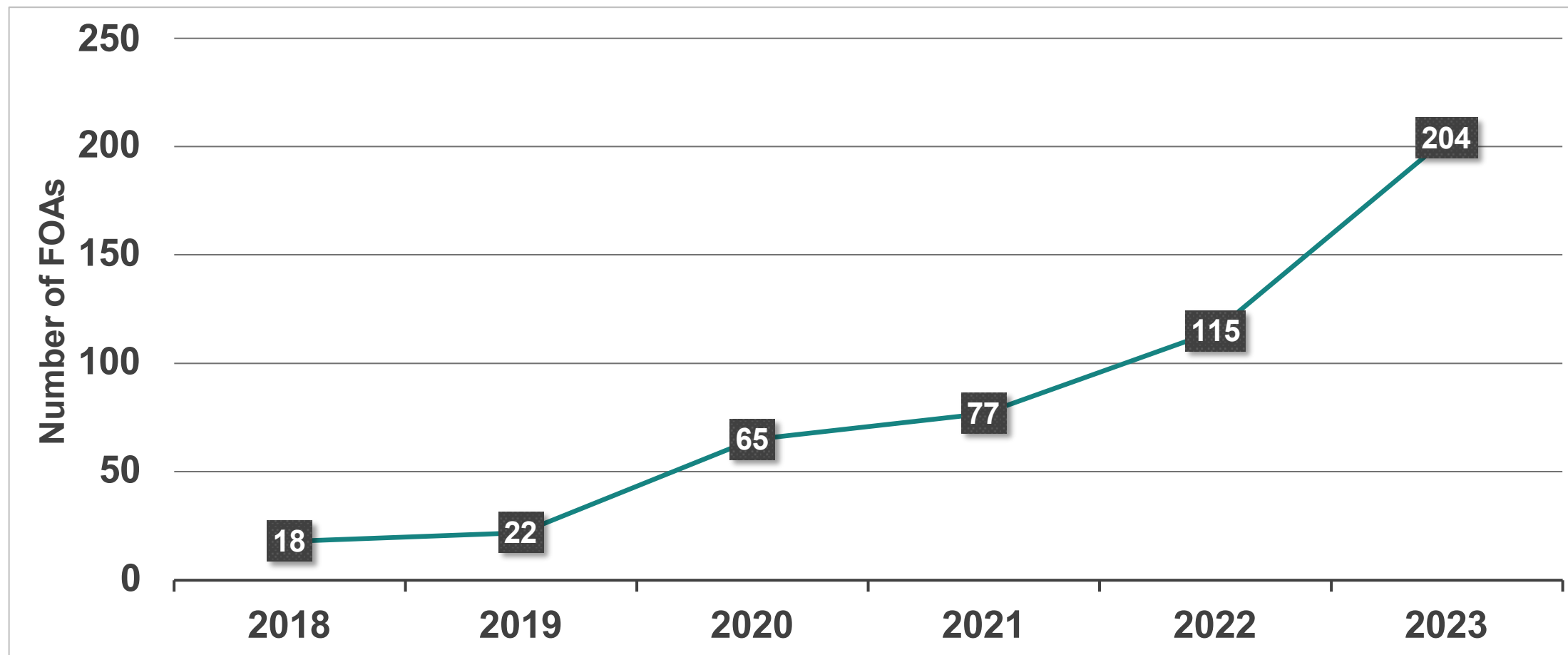
FOCUS
AREA 4

Improving the accuracy and transparency of racial and ethnic equity data

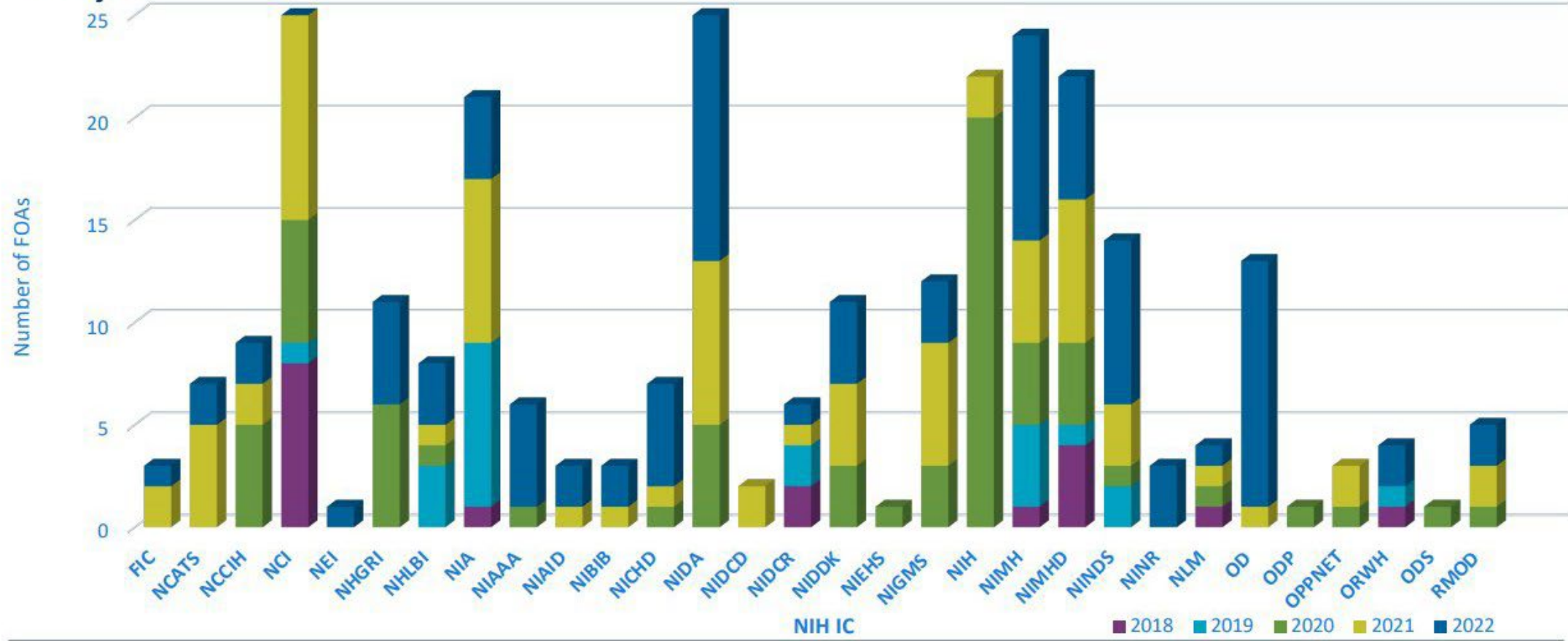
*Noted in the [UNITE Progress Report](#) released October 2022

FOAs Related to Minority Health and Health Disparities

2018-2023



Distribution of Minority Health and Health Disparities FOAs by Year and ICs, 2018-2022



UNITE Funding Opportunities



Active NOFOs

- Science Education Partnership Awards (SEPA) ([PAR-23-137](#)) – 19 ICOs signed on
- Research With Activities Related to Diversity (ReWARD) ([PAR-23-122](#)) – 21 ICOs signed on
- Instrumentation Grant (S10) Program for Resource-Limited Institutions ([PAR-23-138](#)) – 16 ICOs signed on
- Strengthening Research Opportunities for NIH Grants (STRONG) ([PAR-23-144](#)) – 17 ICOs signed on
- **Assessment of Climate at Institutions (ACT) Award ([PAR-24-038](#)) (released 12/7/23)**

NOFOs under Development:

- Research Capacity Building Program to Enhance Workforce Diversity

The NCI Equity & Inclusion Program (EIP)

The EIP Initiative is a top priority for NCI Leadership.

EIP Working Groups addressing three major areas:

1. Enhancing Research to Address Cancer Health Disparities
2. Ensuring Diversity of Thought and Background in the Cancer Research Workforce
3. Promoting an Equitable and Inclusive Community at NCI



<https://www.cancer.gov/research/key-initiatives/nci-equity-inclusion-program>

Ensuring Diversity of Thought and Background in the Cancer Research Workforce

The EIAP Aims to Facilitate the Advancement of Scientists from Diverse Backgrounds:

- Enhance professional skills;
- Guide preparation of an R01 grant application;
- Provide access to a mentoring and peer network; and
- Grow a community of emerging independent investigators from diverse backgrounds.



FY24 Cohort application is closed, but another call for FY25 scholars will take place. Applications for FY25 will commence in Dec. 2024

Ensuring Diversity of Thought and Background in the Cancer Research Workforce

Consider volunteering as an EIAP Mentor!

Becoming a mentor of one of these young investigators may be of a significant impact on them and cancer research.

Your expertise would be invaluable for the EIAP scholars.

Your insights and tips on career development would complement the resources and activities provided by the EIAP program.



Volunteer mentor expectations:

- Meet with EIAP scholar monthly (virtually or in person, if possible);
- Attend a mentor training session; and
- Participate in conversations with EIAP program staff related to the mentoring experience

Contact: Jay Revilleza (mariajamelarevilleza@nih.gov)

Ensuring Diversity of Thought and Background in the Cancer Research Workforce

Cancer Moonshot Scholars program

Aim: **Increase number of applications** from Early Stage Investigators *from diverse backgrounds.*



**Funding
Opportunity:
RFA-CA-22-050**

*Expect to fund
45 new R01s during the
next 3 years.*

Due Dates:
November 8, 2022
June 6, 2023
February 6, 2024



cancer.gov/moonshotscholars



Ensuring Diversity of Thought and Background in the Cancer Research Workforce



There are a number of training opportunities available to support [workforce diversity through the NCI CURE Program.](#)

An underutilized mechanism supports re-entry into the research workforce – this may become even more important post-COVID 19.

You just heard about these mechanisms from Dr. Wallace

NIH Anti-Harassment Policy

[The National Academies report on sexual harassment of women in science found that “federal agencies may be perpetuating the problem of sexual harassment.”](#) Past and the current NIH Director stated that she is concerned that NIH has been part of the problem.

Clarifying expectations for institutions and investigators to ensure a safe workplace

- Read more on the [6/14/2019](#) and [6/29/2021](#) “Open Mike” blog
- Instituting new reporting policies for change in PI Institution.
- “...*the request for approval should include mention as to whether change(s) in PD/PI or Senior/Key Personnel is related to concerns about safety and/or work environments (e.g. due to concerns about harassment, bullying, retaliation, or hostile working conditions).*”

NIH Anti-Harassment Policy

- **Providing clear channels of communication to the NIH**

- It is appropriate to report all types of harassment, including sexual harassment, discrimination, and other forms of inappropriate conduct that result in a hostile working environment.
- For guidance on where to report and information on what to expect after reporting visit <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/harassment/find-help.htm>.
- For concerns related to harassment affecting NIH-funded research, an email can be sent to: GranteeHarassment@od.nih.gov
- Or incidences may be directly reported using a webform: <https://public.era.nih.gov/shape/public/notificationForm.era>

- The [June 29, 2021](#) “Open Mike” blog provides data regarding harassment reports to the NIH during the period 2016-2020.

- NCI is committed to ending structural racism in biomedical research and supports (and works together with) the NIH UNITE initiative.
- NIH and NCI efforts will go beyond race and ethnicity to include other underserved and underrepresented groups, such as people with disability (see [recent NIH report](#) here).
- NIH and NCI encourage reporting of harassment of all kinds. ***All incidences reported to NIH are investigated.***

TOGETHER WE'RE STRONGER

**NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
UNITE INITIATIVE**

The UNITE initiative was established to identify and address structural racism within the NIH-supported and the greater scientific community. With representation from across the NIH Institutes and Centers, UNITE aims to establish an equitable and civil culture within the biomedical research enterprise and reduce barriers to racial equity in the biomedical research workforce.

For more information, please visit:
www.nih.gov/ending-structural-racism/unite

It's when we **face** our shortcomings, **embrace** uncomfortable conversations, and **work together** that we create a more equal society.

Dr. Sanya Springfield
Director, NICHD Center for Complex Health Disparities

“When you see something that’s not right, not just, not fair, you have to speak up.”
Congressman John Lewis

NIH National Institutes of Health

Portraits and Titles:
 - Sherine El-Toukhy, PhD, Senior Science Tech Investigator, NINDS
 - Jimmy Do, Chief, Research Management, NIDDK
 - Michelle Boyle, Special Assistant to Director/Deputy Director, NIH Office of Budget
 - Yasmin Kloth, Chief, Communications and Outreach, The BRAIN Initiative, NINDS
 - David Wilson, Director, NIH/NIH Research Office
 - Lorna Rolle, PhD, Senior Investigator, NINDS
 - Ericka M. Boone, PhD, Acting Director, Division of Biomedical Research Workforce, Director, Division of Loan Repayment
 - Joel Vega-Rodriguez, PhD, Senior Science Tech Investigator, NINDS
 - Dr. Sanya Springfield, Director, NICHD Center for Complex Health Disparities

Exhibit 8: Imagery from The Power of an Inclusive Workplace Recognition Project

Questions?

Read the [UNITE Progress Report](#)

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Read the monthly [Co-Chairs' Corner](#)

THANK YOU

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