

Statement of Solidarity, The Hoekstra Lab

10 June 2020

The Hoekstra Lab maintains a core mission to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion in our laboratory, in our university, in science and in society.

We, the Hoekstra Lab, are horrified by recent events, including the murders of Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and George Floyd, which are shocking and painful reminders of the systemic racism that is embedded in the fabric of our society – from institutional racism that perpetuates inequity to overt acts of racist hatred and prejudice.

Science is not immune to racism. Indeed, racism has been inculcated into science throughout history and into the present day. Key concepts in evolutionary genetics have been, and continue to be, misused to justify, propel and support racism and racist ideologies. Today, Black scientists still face discrimination at every career stage – from hiring and promotion to securing research funding. And, Black colleagues experience everything from indignities to overt racism within our scientific communities.

As the Laboratory Head, I have been too silent in the past, and hence complicit in perpetuating racism in science. I acknowledge that I must play an active role in the fight against racism and stand up to injustice. I acknowledge that I will sometimes make mistakes, but it is my responsibility to educate myself, listen to others, work with my colleagues, and hold myself and lab members accountable to our core values. I will advocate for change, not only in our laboratory but also in our institution and field.

As a laboratory, we firmly believe equity, in and of itself, is essential. Therefore, together, we will actively promote a supportive working environment in which *all* scientists can thrive.

We urge fellow scientists to join us in combating racism and encouraging difficult conversations about racial inequities in our labs, institutions, and society.