



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Cellular & Physiological Sciences

Faculty of Medicine

REDI (Respect, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion) Meeting

Friday November 24, 2023

11:00AM - 12:00PM, via Zoom

Present: Dr. Elizabeth Rideout, Dr. Majid Alimohammadi, Dr. Manouchehr Madani, Dr. Claudia Krebs, Dr. Kenneth Liu, Dr. Kurt Haas, Shalini Iyer, Rita Jin

This meeting was called for:

1. Introduction of new REDI members
2. Approval of agenda
3. Approval of minutes from last meetings (June 28 & September 20, 2023)
4. Matters arising from the minutes
5. Co-chairs update
6. Discussion of the survey report
7. Future directions and next steps

Dr. Rideout began the meeting with land acknowledgement.

1. Introduction of new REDI members

Dr. Krebs, Dr. Liu and Dr. Haas introduced themselves to the existing REDI committee members.

2. Approval of agenda

The agenda was approved.

3. Approval of minutes from June 28 and September 20, 2023

The minutes were approved.

4. Co-chairs update

- **Co-sponsorship proposal for EDI seminars by BMB Department**

Dr. Rideout shared that BMB Department proposed a co-sponsorship with CPS in bringing researchers to give EDI-related seminars. Dr. Haas suggested the choice of the speaker to be made based on whether their agenda aligns with CPS's REDI practices. Dr. Krebs noted that the level of control in the speaker selection by CPS should not be an issue, as it is a ready-made proposal coming from another department, although CPS could also suggest a co-sponsorship for a potential CPS REDI guest speaker to BMB. Dr. Liu agreed with Dr. Krebs and stressed the importance of involvement in these seminars. Coming to a general agreement, Dr. Rideout finalized the

conversation noting that she is going to ask Dr. Moore for funding and asked the committee members to go over the list of potential speakers to express preferences to BMB.

- **Building accessibility**

Dr. Rideout shared that the LSI and herself are in the process of having the Rick Hansen foundation assess the Life Sciences Centre for accessibility and evaluate the building in regards to what has to be done to make the building more accessible.

- **Multifaith rooms**

Dr. Rideout added that LSI is in the works of getting a multifaith room in the building. Drs. Alimohammadi and Krebs agreed that the room should be on the first floor.

- **Student bookable rooms**

Dr. Rideout suggested student bookable rooms for sensitive groups gatherings e.g., identity, mental health and identifying the potential space. Dr. Haas asked if there will be limitations on who is going to be able to book the room and if the booking procedure will require an approval from someone. Dr. Rideout replied that the bookings will be made on priority basis, but the system to book and other details like criteria/restrictions are yet to be identified. Shalini raised a question of student-led EDI activities while sharing the positive experience Shalini had in another department. Dr. Rideout replied that the EDI survey results show that the particular group-led EDI initiatives are sought-after and are being worked on with availability of the rooms being a concern. Dr. Rideout also added that the meaning behind group-led initiatives is to support EDI activities that are initiated not by the committee itself.

- **Co-chair for CPS REDI Committee**

Dr. Rideout shared that her REDI co-chair term had ended and the committee is in search for another candidate to co-chair with Dr. Alimohammadi. She also added that the [Terms of Reference](#) will be adjusted to give opportunity to a person coming from any group (student, staff, faculty) to co-chair and everyone is welcome to express their candidacy to discuss at the next REDI committee meeting.

5. Discussion of the [survey report](#) (last updated Nov 14, 23)

Dr. Alimohammadi presented the REDI Survey Report to the committee members to discuss action plans to address the issues arising from the survey questions and to improve overall performance. Based on the responses, there were 5 themes.

Theme 1: REDI activities support an overall increase in knowledge and engagement with equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Dr. Alimohammadi brought up the idea of involving other medical departments in CPS REDI activities. Dr. Krebs noted that it would be more practical to primarily focus on CPS students to provide the necessary attention while remaining open to students from other departments. Dr. Haas added that any student taught in the department, regardless of their home department, should be taken into the committee's scope. The committee members agreed on taking initiatives to show

active presence whether it is supporting EDI activities run by other departments or in cooperation with them. Dr. Rideout raised a question regarding annual budget request.

Theme 2: Department members prefer to lead EDI-related activities relevant to their career group.

Dr. Krebs expressed a concern regarding the department dividing into groups rather than working as a whole. Dr. Rideout replied that the language of the report will be changed to capture cohesion of the department while the project leaders might come from any group.

Theme 3: Department members prefer the department promotes greater equity, diversity, and/or inclusion in the working and learning environment via tailored career development opportunities and resources to support inclusion.

Dr. Alimohammadi suggested to clarify the exact expectations from REDI committee e.g., inviting speakers, meeting with the Head. Dr. Rideout replied that leaving the answer open-ended is beneficial to provide the support based on each group needs. Dr. Liu suggested collaboration with the people who have expertise in the career development field. Shalini shared the idea of having a platform for people to share their experience in regards to what barriers they face and what actions can be taken.

Theme 4: Department members prefer to receive EDI-related news via email or newsletter.

Dr. Krebs shared that newsletters are not as effective and suggested the committee members to report about the REDI activities to their respective group during meetings. Dr. Haas agreed on inefficiency of newsletters and suggested a format of workshops/forums for open discussions on ideas. Dr. Rideout agreed on the idea of open forums. Dr. Alimohammadi added that the newsletter could be posted on the website and the forum invitations could be sent via email or announced during meetings.

Theme 5: There are differences between department members in experiences of EDI-related barriers and preferences related to resolving these barriers.

To be discussed at the next REDI Committee meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 12:00 pm.

Below please find the notes that were circulated by Dr. Rideout following the meeting:

- 1) Dr. Moore approved a \$1000 contribution from CPS to the BMB EDI-focused speaker
- 2) I am seeking details on what topics the speaker will cover so you can all share your preferences on which speaker appeals most to you
- 3) We now have an annual budget of \$2500 to match BMB's EDI committee budget (to be determined if the \$1000 counts against our first \$2500)

- 4) The multifaith quiet reflection room will go ahead, and be on LSI the main floor, will keep you posted
- 5) The LSI is already working on a system so students can book rooms so no need for action on this right now until their process goes ahead
- 6) I adjusted the [REDI survey report](#) according to our discussion, please use the attached version to make your suggestions at our next meeting (last updated on Nov 27, 23)
- 7) As far as I can see after double-checking there is no requirement for the REDI co-chairs to be two faculty (see attached terms of reference (ToR)). The ToR state that the co-chairs should have diverse perspectives and that members of underrepresented groups should not be overburdened, so we can let that guide our choice at the next meeting.