

Dear all,

We would like to address concerns that we have heard in the community, in particular with regards to the fact that there is not sufficient space to accommodate all who wished to attend the Inclusive Astronomy 2 (IA2) meeting in person. We have attached a report that sheds light on how we found ourselves with 266 pre-registrants and room for only 180 in-person participants; the options we explored to facilitate these numbers, including the addition of remote participation; why we have decided to neither move nor postpone the conference; and how we sought to include a diverse and representative group of attendees to the maximum extent possible.

We also would like to acknowledge the disappointment that some are feeling. We sincerely regret that anyone is feeling left out, dismissed, or marginalized. We also realize that we may appear to be slow to a response; we want to assure that we have been taking time to carefully consider how best to respond to the various points of view that have been shared.

When we embarked on this initiative, it was our sincere desire to continue the conversation started with IA1, provide an opportunity for voices to be heard, and inform the future of Astronomy. As described in the attached report, we evaluated and utilized methods we believed were valid to reduce if not eliminate bias in the selection for in-person participation. We also sought to include as many voices as possible of those who have been marginalized in our community. The lesson that we are learning is that since IA1, the demand for opportunities to participate in this type of forum has grown enormously. There are many voices, each with concerns and issues that need to be acknowledged and addressed. No two are the same. We would have liked to include them all. It is inspiring that this conversation has grown to such a magnitude.

We also recognize the complexity of creating an opportunity for all to participate and be heard. Our space and resources are finite, yet the need to continue this conversation is of paramount importance. We want to move forward with the current IA2 meeting because these conversations are critical to inform the upcoming 2020 Decadal Survey. We believe this meeting, while insufficient in its capacity to host the full discussion, will still bring about positive outcomes to inform the 2020 Decadal Survey, impact the state of the profession, and provide a springboard for the continuation of a conversation we must keep having in the community. We invite you to join with us in making this and future IA conferences a success, whether in person, remotely, or through conversations and work with others, and work with us to continue the conversation to IA3 and beyond.

Based on what we are learning, we will be putting together recommendations for more inclusive IA meetings, and we encourage others to plan for future IA conferences. We plan to have discussions on the response from the community regarding IA2 at the conference and want to continue to hear feedback from the community, including from those who are unable to attend the conference. Please get in touch at inclusion2@stsci.edu.

We thank you for your patience and helpful communication.

The IA2 Organizers