

LOC Recommendations



The Inclusive Astronomy 2 (IA2) Local Organizing Committee (LOC) has put together a comprehensive document of recommendations for planning future Inclusive Astronomy conferences based on feedback received and lessons learned. While these are specific to the IA series, many parts will be applicable to other conferences as well.

Letter to the Astronomy Community

July 21, 2020

To the astronomy community,

The Inclusive Astronomy 2 (IA2) conference was held 14-15 October 2019 at the Space Telescope Science Institute in Baltimore, Maryland, USA. Over the last year, we, the [Local Organizing Committee \(LOC\) of IA2](#), have been working on a document of recommendations and lessons learned for groups who wish to continue the Inclusive Astronomy series and anyone wanting to plan a more inclusive conference. Please note, this is not the conference recommendations about how to improve inclusivity in astronomy; that is a separate document being produced by the Science Organizing Committee.

We originally aimed to distribute this document in March, but given the COVID-19 pandemic, protests for Black lives, and other recent events, we felt it was insensitive, or even harmful, to send a document out that was finalized in a rush at a challenging time, and that would be difficult to process and act upon in the near term. However, we have realized there is never an optimal time to distribute these recommendations, and we don't know how the situation will continue to change. With the rising societal engagement with antiracism, specifically anti-Black racism, as well as an increasing number of conferences moving online or ahead in different forms, the importance of circulating these recommendations now is evident.

It is irresponsible and wrong to continue operating as if everything is "normal," and this long-overdue commitment to change in astronomy should happen without delay. It is essential that we commit to: centering the voices of people with marginalized identities, productively addressing injustices, lobbying institutional leadership to change discriminatory policies, codifying structural support for minoritized astronomers, examining and dismantling our individual and systemic biases, and collaboratively evaluating the goals that we have in the astronomical community. Since 2015, the Inclusive Astronomy (IA) conference series has strived for these goals. We believe that now, as much as ever, we need conferences such as this one to facilitate a space for change, healing, and growth within the astronomical community.

During the planning and execution of IA2, we made missteps that caused harm. These were rightfully pointed out by many, both within and outside of the astronomical community, including our Black colleagues, our trans and nonbinary colleagues, and our colleagues with disabilities. We apologize to the individuals and communities that were harmed as a result of our actions and inactions. With the recommendations in this document, we hope to take a small step forward in making amends for where we went wrong by helping future IA meetings better serve people with marginalized identities. To build this document, we started from the IA1 recommendations and have drawn from our own planning experiences, and incorporated the collective knowledge of those who offered their feedback at every stage of the planning process. However, even with that feedback, we know that these recommendations will still be incomplete and contain our own biases. Our hope is this will be a living document that will be built upon by the community and future conference organizers who wish to do better as we endeavor to make astronomy truly more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

We thank everyone that helped us build this document, particularly the people that highlighted our missteps and disagreed with our actions. This gave us an opportunity to be reflective and account for our own contributions to the community. Our experience has shown us that building this path forward is not a linear or easy one and that it will take all of us.

Thank you,

The IA2 LOC

Recommendations for Planning Inclusive Astronomy Conferences

Below are the *Recommendations for Planning Inclusive Astronomy Conferences* written by the IA2 LOC (in PDF and editable Word format). Please use, build upon, and redistribute these recommendations.



IA2 LOC Recommendations.pdf



IA2 LOC Recommendations.docx

Referencing these Recommendations

You can reference the document as follows: "Recommendations for Planning Inclusive Astronomy Conferences, Inclusive Astronomy 2 Local Organizing Committee, July 2020", the arXiv link is available here: <https://arxiv.org/abs/2007.10970>

Contact Information

Please reach out to the [LOC here](#) for more information, questions or feedback, or contact members of the [Organizing Committees](#).