EDI Strategic Plan 2025–2030: Driving Innovation and Collaboration

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) are foundational pillars for fostering innovation, driving excellence, and ensuring the equitable advancement of computational biology.

Inclusivity in computational biology is not only about representation, it is about harnessing the full spectrum of human talent and perspectives to propel our field and strengthen our global community. Over the past years, the International Society for Computational Biology (ISCB) has made important strides in promoting EDI initiatives, yet we recognize that work remains to be done.

This strategic plan outlines a roadmap for ISCB's EDI efforts for the period 2025–2030, aiming to drive change and foster a culture of inclusivity within the ISCB community. Grounded in data-driven insights, successful elements of the previous strategic plan, community feedback, and best practices, this plan seeks to address the systemic barriers to diversity and inclusion while leveraging the unique strengths of ISCB to effect meaningful transformation.

The previous EDI strategic plan (2020–2021) was focused on five major Components:

1. **The Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Committee.** Increasing social accountability for change in the society: Develop policy statements and initiatives that clearly communicate society values in regard to diversity and promote inclusiveness at ISCB-associated events.
2. **Progress assessment.** Obtaining data and developing measures to assess progress.
3. **Voluntary training.** The “ISCB Awareness toolkit”. To mitigate the impact of bias.
4. **Recruitment initiative.** Developing a pipeline to increase diversity in ISCB membership, leadership and honors.
5. **Mentoring.** Developing a program that supports trainees and young investigators from diverse backgrounds to counter the systematic diminishing number of women and minorities at advanced levels compared to the initial entry levels (leaky pipeline).

These Components delivered the following achievements:

1. Annual data reports on diversity of ISCB members.
2. Implementation of the “ISCB Awareness toolkit”.
3. Annual data reports on diversity of nomination/selection of ISCB honors and awards.
4. Development of a centralized web page containing ISCB EDI-related information.
5. Implementation of the Dependent Care Grant for ISMB.

For the ISCB EDI Strategic Plan 2025–2030 we will focus on the following Components:

1. Give continuity to the five Components stated in the 2020–2025 EDI Strategic plan.
2. **Recruitment and leadership development initiative.** We acknowledge that ISCB has made great progress on representation in leadership positions and awards in some dimensions of diversity; however, it is now important to revise the impact of the strategy in Communities of Special Interest (COSI) leadership.

3. **Community engagement and outreach.** Enhancing outreach efforts to attract and retain diverse talent within computational biology, fostering mentorship programs, and forging partnerships with organizations dedicated to EDI in STEM fields.

These Components translate into the following goals:

1. Continue developing annual data reports on diversity of ISCB members and nomination/selection of ISCB honors and awards. Build a system to automate the task.
2. Updating the “ISCB Awareness toolkit” when necessary.
3. Updating the centralized web page containing ISCB EDI-related information when necessary.
4. Give continuity to the Dependent Care Grant for ISMB; this will require working on fundraising to support the initiative yearly. Workup a plan to expand the Dependent Care Grant to other ISCB associated meetings.
5. Conduct a comprehensive survey to gather data on the current composition of COSI leadership in terms of diversity.
6. Evaluate existing policies related to recruitment and leadership selection within COSIs, and if necessary, update policies to ensure they promote diversity.
7. Develop a mentoring program that supports trainees and young investigators from underrepresented backgrounds to counter the leaky pipeline. We propose to work on this aim in collaboration with COSI leaders, to help integrate young scientists in their research communities, and provide them with guidance to learn leadership skills.
8. Develop a content plan, in collaboration with ISCB personnel in charge of communications, to share EDI relevant information with ISCB members.