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Institutions have a moral and ethical duty to make scientific research more diverse and representative. Credit: OIST

Lab groups, departments, universities and national funders should encourage participation in science from as many sectors of the population as possible. It's the right thing to do – both morally and to help build a sustainable future for research that truly represents society.

A more representative workforce is more likely to pursue questions and problems that go beyond the narrow slice of humanity that much of science (biomedical science in particular) is currently

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success from across the world. They are inspiring, and show what can – and must – be done.



What does it take to make an institution more diverse?

To boost recruitment and participation in science among some under-represented groups is difficult. Statistics from the US National Science Foundation show that the representation of minority ethnic groups in the sciences would need to more than double to match the groups' overall share of the US population.

As we highlight in a Careers piece this week, there are steps that groups, departments and institutions can take to try to draw from a broader pool of talent. Some of these demand effort to reach out to under-represented communities, to encourage teenagers who might otherwise not consider science as an

option. Even the wording of job advertisements can put people off – candidates from some backgrounds might be less likely to consider themselves 'outstanding' or 'excellent', and so might not even apply. Yet diversity efforts should not stop when people are through the door. To retain is as important as to recruit – mentoring and support is essential for all young scientists, and especially so for those who have been marginalized by academic culture.

Projects to boost participation are often the passion and work of a few dedicated individuals. More institutions and funders should seek, highlight and support both the actions and the individuals.

There are moral and ethical reasons for institutions to act. And there are other potential benefits, too. Firms are recognizing that diversity – and associated attitudes and behaviours – is a business issue. A report from consultancy firm McKinsey earlier this year was just the latest to set out the healthy relationship between a company's approach to inclusion and diversity and its bottom line. The report, *Delivering through Diversity*, reaffirms the positive link between a firm's financial

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diverse – here's why they're winning at science

Concerted action to effect change on recruitment and retention can and does make a difference (see T. Hodapp and E. Brown *Nature* **557**, 629–632; 2018). More effort across the board is

overdue. The lack of diversity in science is everyone's problem. Everyone has a responsibility to look around them, to see the problem for what it is, and to act – not just to assume it is someone else's job to fix it.

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See *News Feature* *These labs are remarkably diverse — here's why they're winning at science* and *Career Feature* *What does it take to make an institution more diverse?*

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