# Engaging the Nashville Recommendations:

## Navigating the Inclusive Astronomy Wiki at AAS

Adam Burgasser, Kim Coble, Jessica Mink, Dara Norman
on behalf of the IA2015 Organizers

# Outline

- **Conference philosophy: intersectional approach**
- **Recommendations: expectations for implementation**
- **Navigating the twiki**
- **30 min for Q & A**

**Come to the roundtable discussion on Saturday: 4:15 – 5:30!**

# Inclusive Astronomy 2015

## Conference At-a-Glance

June 17 - 19, 2015
Vanderbilt University

160 astronomers, sociologists, policy makers and community leaders convened to discuss intersectional barriers and solutions to success in astronomy.

**Core Organizing Committee:**

**Carolyn Brinkworth** (National Center for Atmospheric Research), **Adam Burgasser** (University of California, San Diego), **Kim Coble** (Chicago State University), **Jedidah Isler** (Vanderbilt University), **Jessica Mink** (Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory), **Nick Murphy** (Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory, Harvard University), **Dara Norman** (National Optical Astronomy Observatory), **Jane Rigby** (NASA Goddard Space Flight Center), **Keivan Stassun** (Vanderbilt University)

Presentation videos, posters and toolkits: vu.edu/ia2015
Recommendations: bit.ly/1JXIOzZ
Twiki: bit.ly/2r3nidq

# Inclusive Astronomy 2015

## Focus on Four Broad Areas

**Removing Barriers to Access:** Elucidate the major barriers that impede full participation of all interested persons.

**Creating Inclusive Climates:** Cultivate practices that make our professional spaces more inclusive.

**Accessing Policy, Power, and Leadership:** Demystify power structures in astronomy policy making and position oneself for a leadership role.

**Establishing a Community of Inclusive Practice:** Take active measures to ensure that groups, events and institutions are inclusive.

# Resources from IA 2015

**IA 2015 videos, posters and toolkits: [vu.edu/ia2015](vu.edu/ia2015)**

# These Resources are for You

## Indigenous Science Seminar Class Site

Spring 2017

[http://pono.ucsd.edu/~adam/wordpress/indigenousknowing/](http://pono.ucsd.edu/~adam/wordpress/indigenousknowing/)

### Pre-seminar reading:

Check out some of the organizations that support Native scientists in the Americas and abroad:

- **Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science** (SACNAS): http://www.2017sacnas.org/ – be sure to check out UCSD's SACNAS chapter website at http://ucsdsacnas.weebly.com/
- **American Indian Science and Engineering Society** (AISES): http://www.aises.org/
- **World Indigenous Science Network** (WISN): http://www.wisn.org/

**"Astronomy from an indigenous perspective"** by Charee Peters: https://osf.io/r2epw/ ; you can also watch her 2015 presentation at the Inclusive Astronomy conference at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vhuNqzelmA&list=PLlvgWTeleClZrz5rJWvlNVIAQ86IzKp4g&index=9

# Accomplishments

- IA2015 Vision Statement endorsed by American Astronomical Society
- Recommendation for proper use of the GRE endorsed by AAS and implemented by several graduate programs
- Formation of AAS Working Group on Accessibility and Disability (WGAD)
- Racism Town Hall (AAS 226)
- Regular discussions and seminars on inclusivity research in the departments of IA2015 attendees and others (similar to journal club)
- Discussion of IA2015 content at other community/society meetings, e.g. International Astronomical Union, American Geophysical Union, American Association of Physics Teachers
- AAS hosting web platform for development and sharing best practices for adoption and implementation of recommendations by the community

# Endorsement and Adoption

**Endorse:** Institutions publicly endorse vision statement

**AAS Endorses Vision Statement for Inclusive Astronomy**

28 Jul 2016

"I am very pleased that the AAS Council has endorsed the Nashville vision statement for making astronomy more inclusive," says AAS President Christine Jones (Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics). "Offering equal opportunities for people of all races, genders, sexual orientations, and physical abilities to participate in astronomy will benefit both our science and our nation."

**Adopt:** Identify short-term, medium-term and long-term goals based on recommendations relevant to the institution and people at the institution, develop and commit to individual, group, and institutional plans

# Community

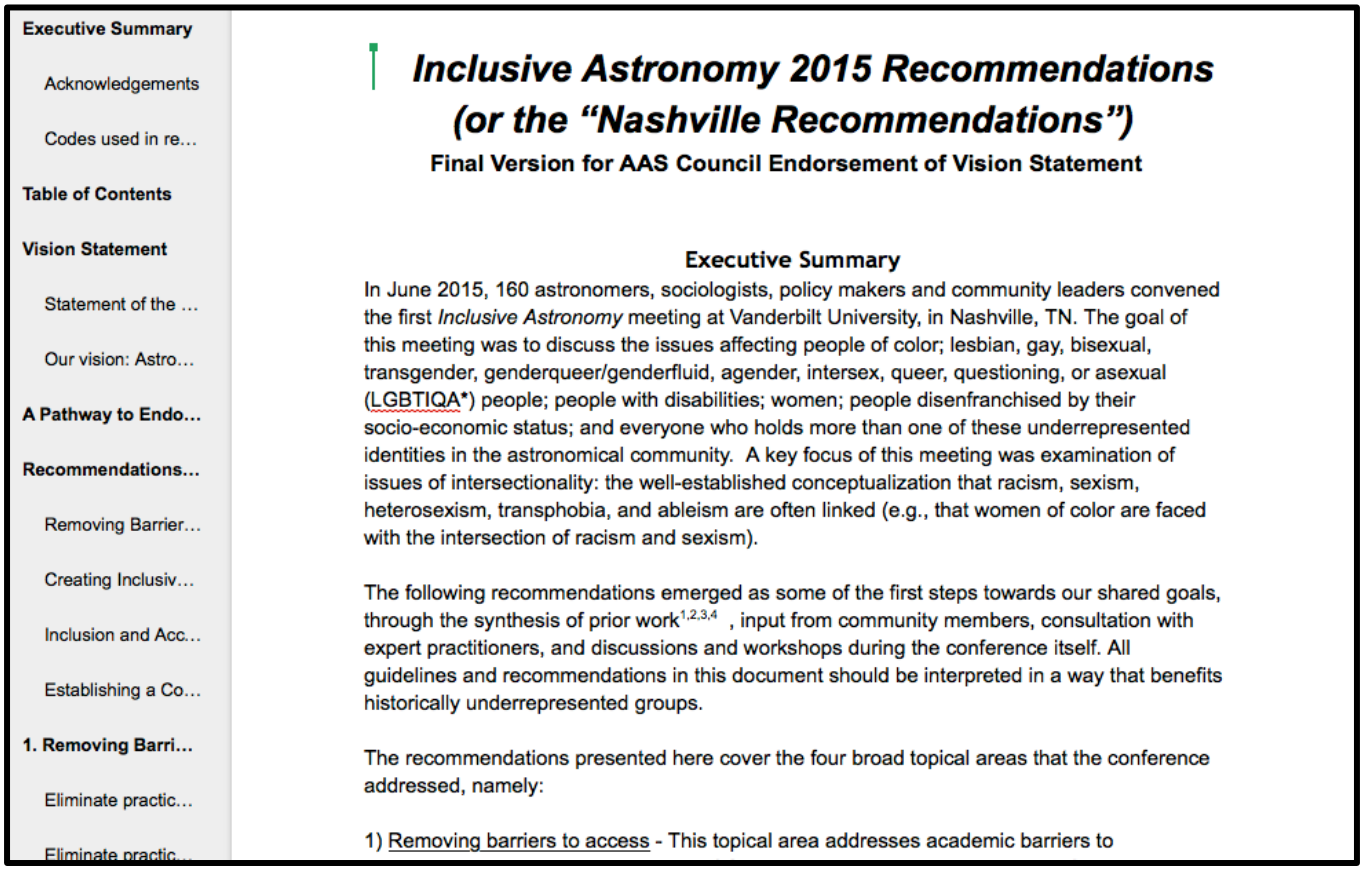
- Institutions annually report on progress:
  - Twiki as a living document
  - Successes
  - Challenges
  - Link your toolkits for specific recommendations
- Semi-annual sessions at AAS meetings to further develop recommendations and assessments, and share experiences of implementation
- Opportunities for intersectional departmental site visits to gauge the climate for people with one or more marginalized identities

# Structure of Recommendations

| For Full Listing: bit.ly/1JXlOzZ | Short (1 - 3 yrs) | Medium (3 - 5 yrs) | Long (5+ yrs) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Barriers to Access** | Develop, publicize, and follow clear criteria for hiring and evaluations. De-emphasize student teaching evaluations as they have been shown to be systematically biased. **RBA3S** | Develop and provide astronomical information using multiple modes of access, with each mode being as accessible as possible. **RB2M** | Research and develop methods and assistive technology to make astronomy accessible to disabled students and astronomers. **RB1L** |
| **Inclusive Climates** | Adopt and publicize clear anti-harassment policies and procedures, including highly transparent reporting avenues. **CIE1S** | Establish identity support networks within and across STEM departments and connect to university-level resources. **CIE2M** | Develop and support astronomy education research groups who investigate teaching and learning in astronomy through the lens of inclusivity and intersectionality. **CIE1L** |
| **Policy & Leadership** | Make information about the processes and procedures to obtain leadership roles in astronomy clear and more accessible. **PPL0S** | The decadal survey should address issues of policy making and leadership diversity imbalances as recommendations that can be acted upon by policy makers. **PPL3M** | Funding of research (e.g., grants) is also tied to metrics on diversity and inclusion of underrepresented and disenfranchised groups. **PPL3L** |
| **Inclusive Practice** | Do your homework. Educate yourself on the extensive history of oppression against marginalized groups in your own culture and the culture you find yourself in. **CIP3S** | Respond promptly when astronomers publicly engage in racism, sexism, heterosexism, cissexism, and/or ableism. **CIP0M** | Develop long-term institutional plans for equity and inclusion, which should be public and include annual progress reports on organizational accessibility. **CIP2L** |

# Full Recommendations

**What should I do with this long list? [bit.ly/1JXIOzZ](bit.ly/1JXIOzZ)**



Executive Summary

Acknowledgements

Codes used in re…

Table of Contents

Vision Statement

Statement of the …

Our vision: Astro…

A Pathway to Endo…

Recommendations…

Removing Barrier…

Creating Inclusiv…

Inclusion and Acc…

Establishing a Co…

1. Removing Barri…

Eliminate practic…

Eliminate practic…

***Inclusive Astronomy 2015 Recommendations (or the "Nashville Recommendations")***

**Final Version for AAS Council Endorsement of Vision Statement**

**Executive Summary**

In June 2015, 160 astronomers, sociologists, policy makers and community leaders convened the first *Inclusive Astronomy* meeting at Vanderbilt University, in Nashville, TN. The goal of this meeting was to discuss the issues affecting people of color; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, genderqueer/genderfluid, agender, intersex, queer, questioning, or asexual (LGBTIQA*) people; people with disabilities; women; people disenfranchised by their socio-economic status; and everyone who holds more than one of these underrepresented identities in the astronomical community. A key focus of this meeting was examination of issues of intersectionality: the well-established conceptualization that racism, sexism, heterosexism, transphobia, and ableism are often linked (e.g., that women of color are faced with the intersection of racism and sexism).

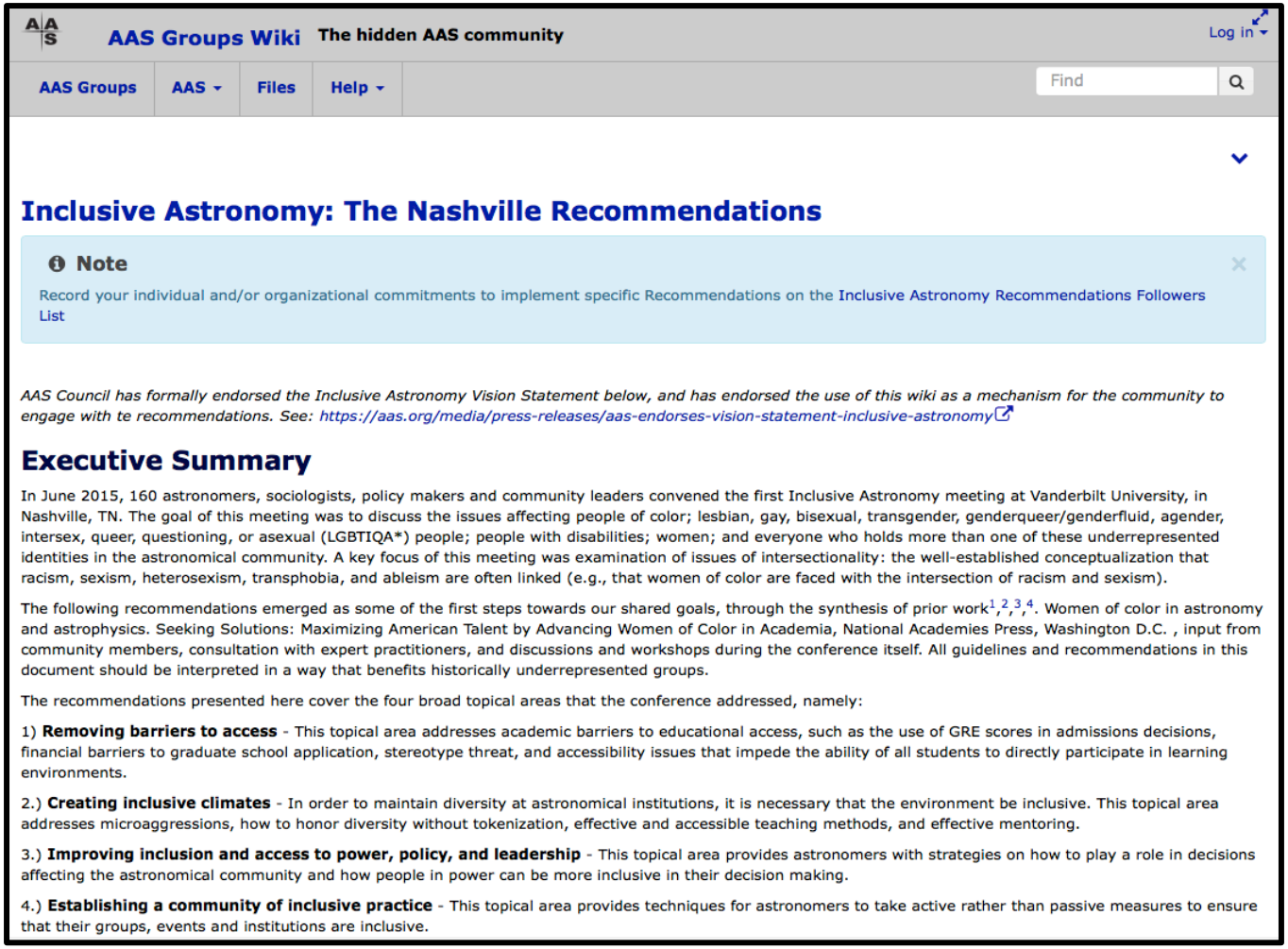
The following recommendations emerged as some of the first steps towards our shared goals, through the synthesis of prior work[1,2,3,4] , input from community members, consultation with expert practitioners, and discussions and workshops during the conference itself. All guidelines and recommendations in this document should be interpreted in a way that benefits historically underrepresented groups.

The recommendations presented here cover the four broad topical areas that the conference addressed, namely:

1) Removing barriers to access - This topical area addresses academic barriers to

# AAS Twiki

**Endorse the vision, then engage with the more manageable twiki in areas most relevant to you and your organization: [bit.ly/2r3nidq](bit.ly/2r3nidq)**



AAS Groups Wiki The hidden AAS community

Log in

AAS Groups | AAS | Files | Help | Find

## Inclusive Astronomy: The Nashville Recommendations

**Note**

Record your individual and/or organizational commitments to implement specific Recommendations on the Inclusive Astronomy Recommendations Followers List

*AAS Council has formally endorsed the Inclusive Astronomy Vision Statement below, and has endorsed the use of this wiki as a mechanism for the community to engage with te recommendations. See: https://aas.org/media/press-releases/aas-endorses-vision-statement-inclusive-astronomy*

### Executive Summary

In June 2015, 160 astronomers, sociologists, policy makers and community leaders convened the first Inclusive Astronomy meeting at Vanderbilt University, in Nashville, TN. The goal of this meeting was to discuss the issues affecting people of color; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, genderqueer/genderfluid, agender, intersex, queer, questioning, or asexual (LGBTIQA*) people; people with disabilities; women; and everyone who holds more than one of these underrepresented identities in the astronomical community. A key focus of this meeting was examination of issues of intersectionality: the well-established conceptualization that racism, sexism, heterosexism, transphobia, and ableism are often linked (e.g., that women of color are faced with the intersection of racism and sexism).

The following recommendations emerged as some of the first steps towards our shared goals, through the synthesis of prior work[1],[2],[3],[4]. Women of color in astronomy and astrophysics. Seeking Solutions: Maximizing American Talent by Advancing Women of Color in Academia, National Academies Press, Washington D.C. , input from community members, consultation with expert practitioners, and discussions and workshops during the conference itself. All guidelines and recommendations in this document should be interpreted in a way that benefits historically underrepresented groups.

The recommendations presented here cover the four broad topical areas that the conference addressed, namely:

1) **Removing barriers to access** - This topical area addresses academic barriers to educational access, such as the use of GRE scores in admissions decisions, financial barriers to graduate school application, stereotype threat, and accessibility issues that impede the ability of all students to directly participate in learning environments.

2.) **Creating inclusive climates** - In order to maintain diversity at astronomical institutions, it is necessary that the environment be inclusive. This topical area addresses microaggressions, how to honor diversity without tokenization, effective and accessible teaching methods, and effective mentoring.

3.) **Improving inclusion and access to power, policy, and leadership** - This topical area provides astronomers with strategies on how to play a role in decisions affecting the astronomical community and how people in power can be more inclusive in their decision making.

4.) **Establishing a community of inclusive practice** - This topical area provides techniques for astronomers to take active rather than passive measures to ensure that their groups, events and institutions are inclusive.

# Summary Tables

## Recommendations Summary Tables

**Scope of implementation**
Short Term is 1-3 years.
Medium Term is 3-5 years.
Long-term is more than 5 years.

### Removing Barriers to Access: Recommendations Summary Table

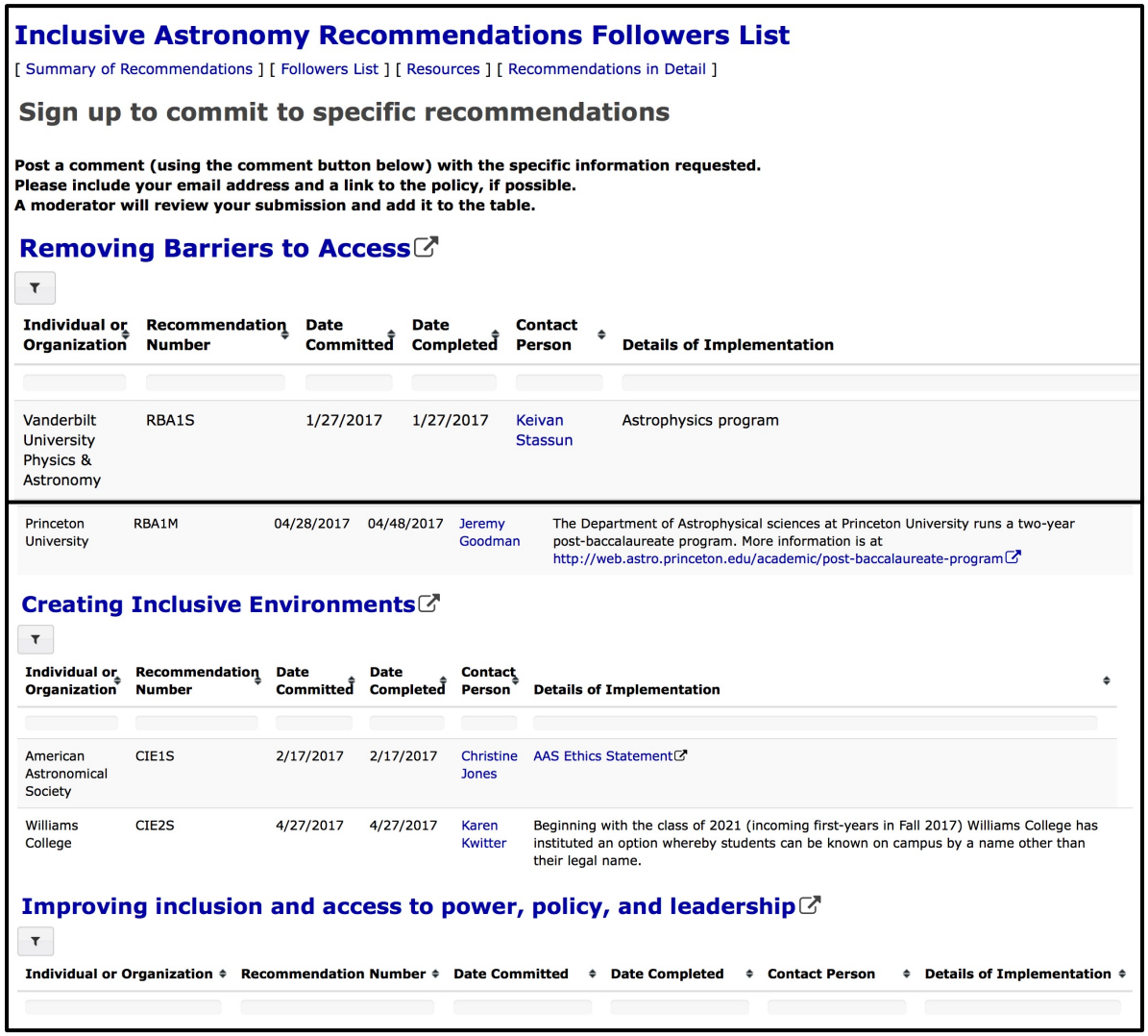
**Context:** must enable people to enter the field so that we can then support, mentor and promote them within the inclusive environments that we create, and into the leadership and power structures of the field. Our ultimate goal is a fully inclusive field. This is necessary but not sufficient: removing the barriers to access will not by itself create an inclusive environment; we also need to change the culture of our field and making sure that people with marginalized identities are included in our field's leadership. The following table summarizes the full recommendations.

**Core Goals:**

1. Make graduate admissions fair.
2. Eliminate barriers in pre-/early-college access to astronomy.
3. Eliminate practices in hiring and promotion that are discriminatory.
4. Ensure that astronomical institutions, facilities and data are accessible to all.

| Number | Short term goals/actions | Target stakeholders |
|---|---|---|
| RBA1S | Develop and deploy best-practice, research-based tools for evaluating graduate school applications holistically and equitably: Eliminate the General and/or Physics Graduate Record Exams (GRE) for graduate school admission (see the AAS statement of endorsement), and integrate holistic measures of scientific talent into graduate admissions procedures (see, e.g., the Fisk-Vanderbilt Bridge Program toolkit for sample protocols and rubrics). | Universities, departments |
| RBA2S | Make graduate school applications affordable: Reduce or eliminate graduate school application fees. | Universities |
| RBA3S | Develop, publicize, and follow clear criteria for hiring and evaluations. De-emphasize student teaching evaluations as they have been shown to be systematically biased. Make hires in broad areas of research topics. Develop a common application service for job applications to reduce workload on applicants. | Universities, public and private research organizations, departments |

# Commit to Specific Recommendations



## Inclusive Astronomy Recommendations Followers List

[ Summary of Recommendations ] [ Followers List ] [ Resources ] [ Recommendations in Detail ]

### Sign up to commit to specific recommendations

**Post a comment (using the comment button below) with the specific information requested.**
**Please include your email address and a link to the policy, if possible.**
**A moderator will review your submission and add it to the table.**

### Removing Barriers to Access

| Individual or Organization | Recommendation Number | Date Committed | Date Completed | Contact Person | Details of Implementation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Vanderbilt University Physics & Astronomy | RBA1S | 1/27/2017 | 1/27/2017 | Keivan Stassun | Astrophysics program |
| Princeton University | RBA1M | 04/28/2017 | 04/48/2017 | Jeremy Goodman | The Department of Astrophysical sciences at Princeton University runs a two-year post-baccalaureate program. More information is at http://web.astro.princeton.edu/academic/post-baccalaureate-program |

### Creating Inclusive Environments

| Individual or Organization | Recommendation Number | Date Committed | Date Completed | Contact Person | Details of Implementation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Astronomical Society | CIE1S | 2/17/2017 | 2/17/2017 | Christine Jones | AAS Ethics Statement |
| Williams College | CIE2S | 4/27/2017 | 4/27/2017 | Karen Kwitter | Beginning with the class of 2021 (incoming first-years in Fall 2017) Williams College has instituted an option whereby students can be known on campus by a name other than their legal name. |

### Improving inclusion and access to power, policy, and leadership

| Individual or Organization | Recommendation Number | Date Committed | Date Completed | Contact Person | Details of Implementation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

# GRE Requirements

## See link to special page for GRE status:

Physics GRE requirements for US/Canadian Astronomy Programs

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help

kcoble.csu@gmail.com Share

View only

The following programs are sorted by Physics GRE score acceptance policy, where the programs that have completely abandoned the Physics GRE are listed on top and those with increasingly less-progressive policies are listed towards the end (otherwise listing is alphabetical). The AAS council's recommendation is "that graduate programs eliminate or make optional the GRE and PGRE as metrics of evaluation for graduate applicants," but the author of this spreadsheet believes all depreciations of the test are positive developments and should be encouraged. For more info on the rationale for such a change, please see the links below the table.

*Please send e-mails to guillochon@gmail.com to propose edits to this list.*

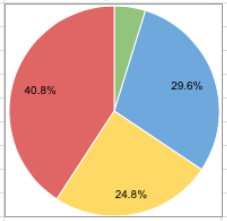
| Program | Department † | Physics GRE* | Policy | Verified (by) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cal State Northridge [m] | Phys. & Ast. | N | URL | Y (J. Barranco) |
| Michigan [f] | Ast. & Astrophys. | N | URL | Y (E. Rauscher) |
| New Mexico State | Astronomy | N | URL | Y (J. Jackiewicz) |
| San Francisco State [m] | Phys. & Ast. | N | URL | Y (J. Barranco) |
| UT Austin [f] | Astronomy | N | URL | Y (C. Casey) |
| Vanderbilt | Astrophysics | N | URL | Y (J. Guillochon) |
| Alabama | Phys. & Ast. | O | URL | Y (J. Bailin) |
| Alberta | Ast. & Astrophys. | O | URL | Y (N. Ivanova) |
| Arizona | Astronomy | O | URL | Y (E. Cangi) |
| Arizona | Planetary | O | URL | Y (A. Springmann) |
| Appalacian State | Phys. & Ast. | O | | N |
| Bowling Green | Phys. & Ast. | O | | N |
| Brandeis | Physics | O | URL | Y (E. Cangi) |
| Caltech [f] | Planetary | O | URL | Y (H. Ngo) |
| Case Western Reserve | Astronomy | O | URL | Y (C. Mihos) |
| Central Florida | Physics | O | | Y (A. Springmann) |
| Clemson | Phys. & Ast. | O | | N |
| Denver | Phys. & Ast. | O | URL | Y (J. Hoffman) |
| Eastern Michigan | Phys. & Ast. | O | | N |
| Florida Inst. of Tech [f] | Ast. & Astrophys. | O | | Y (E. Perlman) |
| Georgia State [fu] | Astronomy | O | | Y (M. Bentz) |
| Harvard [o] | Astronomy | O | URL | Y (J. Guillochon) |
| Indiana Univ. | Astronomy | O | | Y (E. Mills) |
| Johns Hopkins | Planetary | O | | Y (S. Horst) |
| Kansas State | Physics | O | URL | Y (J. Guillochon) |
| McGill | Astrophysics | O | | Y (D. Haggard) |

* Key:

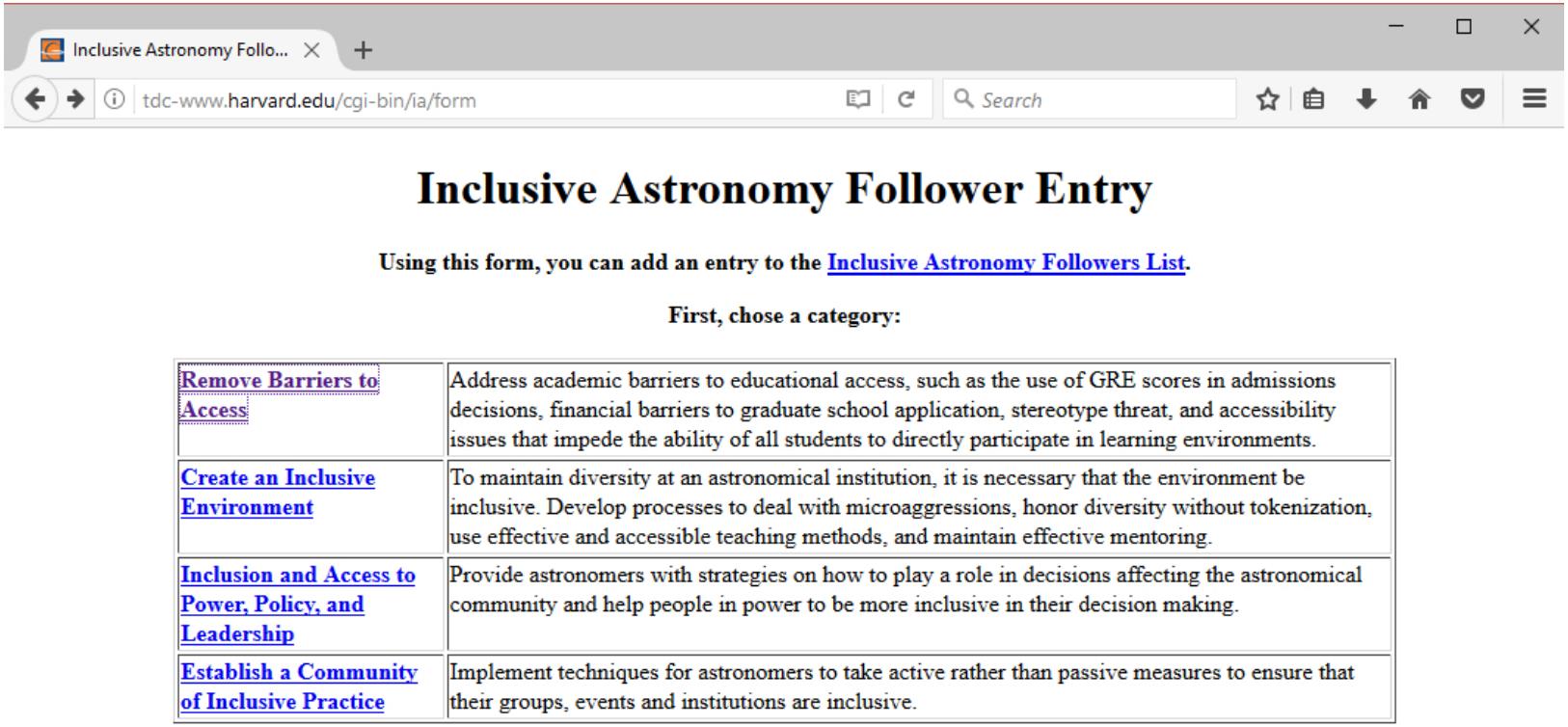
- N = Does not accept PGRE
- O = Optional reporting
- R = Reporting recommended
- Y = Still required

[a] = Alternative requirement if PGRE not reported
[c] = Considering relaxing policy
[d] = Department ignores PGRE, but school requires
[e] = "Exceptions" made
[f] = Offers fee waiver
[m] = Masters only program
[n] = No fee to apply
[o] = Online policy not yet updated to reflect current status
[r] = PGRE weight reduced in evaluation or a wide range of scores have been adm
[u] = Allows unofficial reporting

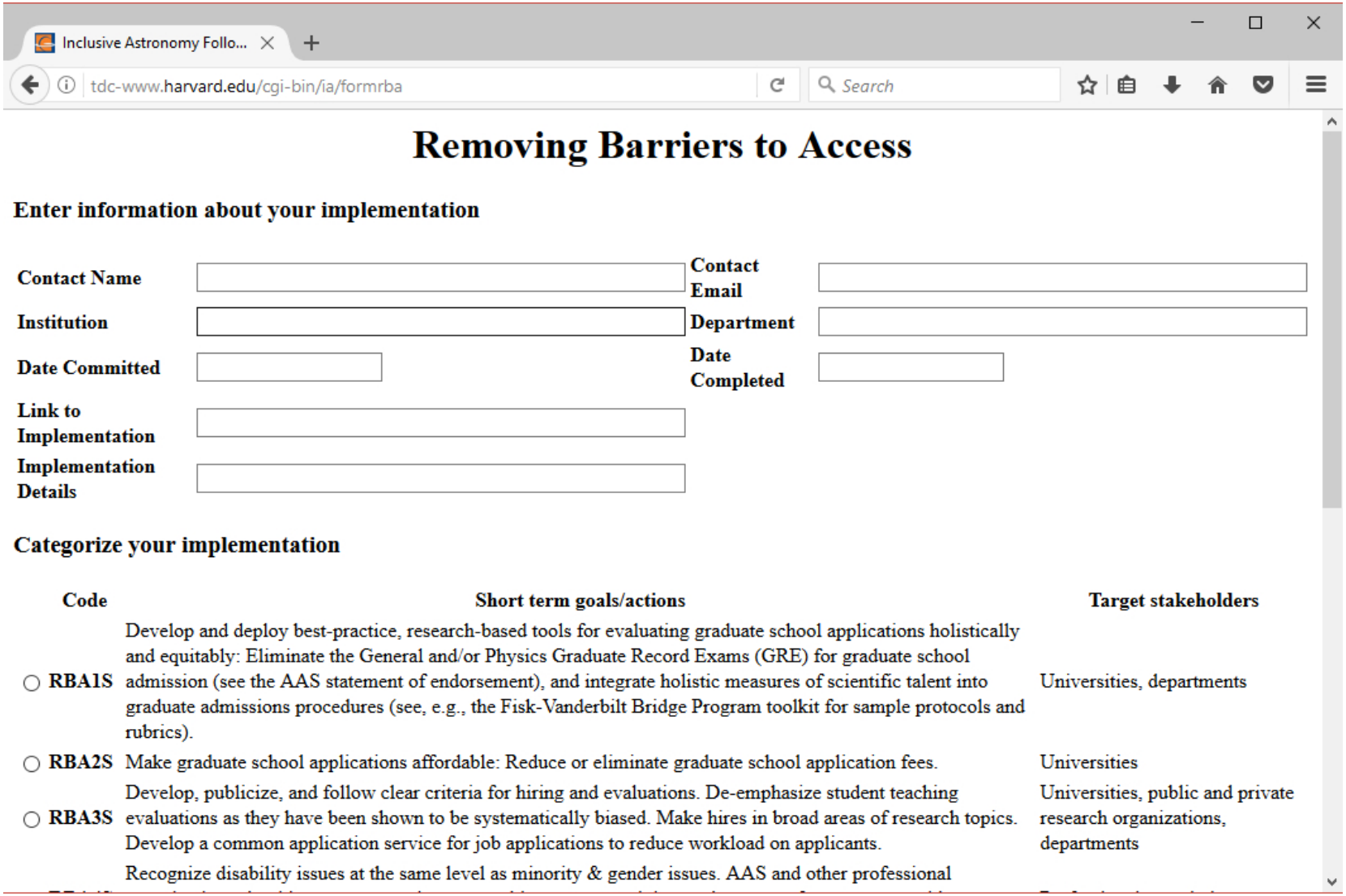
Fraction of programs with each policy:



# Adding Your Efforts: Input Form 1



# Adding Your Efforts: Input Form 2



# Discussion

**(How) have you been using the recommendations to change your institution?**

**Is the AAS wiki infrastructure useful for you?**