

## **1. How important should diversity be at Harvard? What strategies should the University pursue to address diversity?**

Diversity should be of critical importance to Harvard as an institution, and *at* Harvard, as a learning community.

First, Harvard must prioritize attracting a richly diverse community of students, faculty, and staff. To do so, the University must continue to invest in widespread outreach for new student recruitment, with a focus on individuals and communities who may not otherwise see themselves as a Harvard “fit,” including first-generation college students. This also includes continuing to support Harvard’s field-leading financial aid program to support talented individuals who otherwise would not be able to afford a Harvard education.

Accessibility, inclusion, and belonging isn’t just about admission, however. Harvard must also continue to invest in programs and supports for students of all backgrounds so that upon matriculation, they have a sustained support system to enable them to reach their full potential, personally and scholastically. Programs like the Freshman Orientation Program and supports offered by the Bureau of Study Counsel, the Freshman Dean’s office, the Office of Career Services, and other University entities are critical examples of such resources (of which I was a direct beneficiary during my time on campus). Support for well-resourced student groups and empowered student leadership to enable a healthy culture of feedback between students and university administrators is also crucial to fostering a climate of genuine inclusion, and a culture of institutional learning and progression in support of diversity.

Faculty recruitment and retention is its own priority, especially in departments and fields where diverse talent is often underrepresented. Unfortunately, in academia--as in many professional fields--advancement for traditionally underrepresented individuals including women and people of color is notoriously difficult. Harvard has an obligation to continue developing and promulgating best practices for equitable hiring and advancement at the policy level within the University, and in functional practice. This is work that will take continued attention and re-commitment; the Presidential Task Force on Inclusion and Belonging convened in 2016 was a promising start and the University must continue to build upon related priorities, learning and updating these practices as we learn and evolve our own understanding of what works and what doesn’t.

Beyond policy and practice, diversity must also be prominent and present in institutional culture. This includes the more nebulous--but deeply important--prioritization of related issues in the narratives that University leadership promote; in the faculty and the scholarship that Harvard promotes and platforms; in the festivals and occasions that we celebrate together as students, faculty, administrators, and alumni alike. These acts taken together form norms and impact the way that members of the Harvard community see themselves and one another--and likewise, how the world understands Harvard’s values. True “diversity” doesn’t amount to a set of policies or even a reflection of student or faculty composition, but rather, a holistic commitment lived

every day to embracing all of the facets of the world and ensuring that when Harvard says it commits to serving society, it is truly, fully doing so.

## **2. Please state your views on affirmative action and race-conscious admissions.**

Harvard's commitments to diversity starts first and foremost with the preservation of its holistic admissions evaluations, including affirmative action and race-conscious admissions practices. Creating a diverse community is essential to fulfilling Harvard's mission of expanding opportunity and educating engaged citizens and leaders. I believe deeply that Harvard's interest in fostering the educational benefits of diversity is core to its institutional mission, and also believe that consideration for race in admissions, among other factors of diversity, is a critical component of Harvard being able to successfully do so.

This commitment must be partnered with commitments to making a Harvard education accessible along multiple dimensions, as I detail in response to Question 1.

## **3. What do you think Harvard's role should be in creating a more equitable, inclusive, and just society?**

Like many institutions of higher education, Harvard serves as a training ground for future leaders. In this way, universities hold enormous potential to be instruments of justice, and to actively promote and advance equity, tolerance, and societal improvement. Universities, and Harvard in particular, also powerfully develop knowledge and culture. They set norms by reinforcing values and behaviors as a community among scholars, administrators, and faculty before students graduate--and then perpetuate those norms and values through their widespread alumni community after graduation. Harvard's commitment to serving society and affecting positive change in the world must be inherently and deeply related to advancing equity, inclusion, and justice as foundational tenets of its mission.

In this particular moment, we are facing significant, historical inflection points along several dimensions as a society: political, social, technological. In the applied world, educational institutions also carry the tremendous privilege and responsibility of framing global problems for their student bodies and for academic fields in ways that go on to materially direct attention, energy, and resources in academic, private sector, and public sector settings. In many ways, institutions like Harvard help to frame what society sees as possible--both the good that should be worked towards, and the bad to be avoided.

In the technology equity and policy work that my own career has focused on, I have seen this influence manifested in powerful ways. Technology is not destiny, nor is the potential wealth and social inequality and injustice that transformational technological development poorly applied has the potential to deliver. Decisions made about knowledge production, research and

development, and deployment make the difference between technology that in practice truly serves the public interest and promotes justice and prosperity, and developments which do the opposite. For example, at the Partnership on AI, we worked closely with academic institutions, government research funding agencies, and companies to encourage more multidisciplinary research on issues at the intersection of technology and society, in an effort to help build a field of *sociotechnical* thinkers who are better positioned to consider the social consequences of technology development in context and to craft approaches that consider such issues working alongside diverse stakeholders from the very start. Though this is an example from one domain, these approaches can be transformational to entire fields of study, and have ripple effects in sectors beyond applying that cross-disciplinary thinking.

Across all of the issue areas that Harvard cares about, the University has an opportunity to produce transformational leaders in its pedagogy and in how Harvard equips its student leaders to think critically about their contributions to a more just and equitable society.

#### **4. What steps have you taken to bring diversity and inclusion to Harvard, to your workplace, and/or to an organization that you have been involved with?**

Issues of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging have been a core focus of my time at Harvard and beyond. As an undergraduate at the College, I was on the leadership team of the Radcliffe Union of Students, a student group dedicated to building community for intersectional feminists of every gender. I also served on the Undergraduate Council for several years, during which time I advocated for several policies designed to enhance the climate of inclusion on campus, including greater accessibility of gender neutral restrooms. While a student, I concentrated in Social Studies and wrote my thesis on the challenges associated with race and gender differences in the lack of board diversity in S&P 500 companies.

In the last five years, as Co-Chair of the Recent Graduates Committee on the Harvard Alumni Association (HAA) Board of Directors, I worked with HAA staff to enhance the transparency of the Board's recruitment process and to champion diversity in our recruitment and nominations process along several dimensions. I also worked to make it an HAA priority that recent graduates in need of financial support to participate in alumni leadership positions could receive it--for example, with a travel reimbursement program that supported individuals working in public interest fields.

In my professional career, I have been principally focused on addressing three big challenge areas to diversity and inclusion in the technology ecosystem: the lack of diverse founders receiving venture capital investment (which directly impacts the proportion of successful businesses and products built run by traditionally underrepresented individuals); the diversity talent and inclusion crises in the technology industry (affecting the recruitment, retention, and overall experience of belonging of underrepresented individuals in the tech workforce); and the broad, critical set of challenges related to the impact of artificial intelligence on issues of bias, representation, and equity in society.

In all of these areas, I have spent much of my time advocating for *measuring* challenges of representation and inclusion and supporting concrete, actionable steps to addressing them. The late James Baldwin famously said “Nothing can be changed until it is faced.” In the technology industry, especially, the idea that you “measure what matters” has become a common trope--an extension of Baldwin’s wisdom. But the technology community often neglects to measure concretely and hold itself accountable to what needs to be one of its principal priorities: ensuring that people of all backgrounds can contribute to helping create the future, starting first by addressing representation within the ranks of its own workforce, and extending to the impacts of the products that are built and delivered to people the world over.

In my work in the Obama Administration White House, I was broadly focused on emerging technology policy, but made it a significant priority to focus policy and outreach efforts on the diversity crisis in the technology ecosystem (which was and still is a significant challenge in the United States--but is also an issue almost everywhere else in the world with mature or emerging technology ecosystems). In this capacity, I supported a policy portfolio focused on increasing diversity and representation of traditionally underrepresented individuals in the U.S. technology and innovation industry and community.

As a part of this work, I led the White House’s efforts to platform underrepresented startup founders and increase the proportion of underrepresented individuals in the computing field and the technology ecosystem. Though the challenges of equity in the technology sector are far from being solved, at the time I worked to generate several significant private-sector commitments to increase diversity in the industry, including galvanizing over 40 leading venture capital firms with over \$100 billion under management to commit to specific actions that advance opportunities for women and underrepresented minorities in the entrepreneurial ecosystem. I organized over 100 engineering school deans at a wide range of institutions of higher education to commit to attracting and retaining a diverse student body; and committed a dozen major technology companies to announce new actions to ensure diverse recruitment and hiring, including the adoption of concrete policies supporting the consideration of diverse candidates for senior executive positions.

I went on to oversee the Obama Administration’s policy work on artificial intelligence (AI). In this capacity I co-chaired an initiative that assembled the Federal Government community to create the first policy strategy and research and development roadmap for AI in the United States. Issues of fairness, bias, representation--and diversity and inclusion in the computing field--were a core focus of the effort, and issues that we worked hard to address in every policy document that we wrote. Our calls for these priorities to be a significant focus for U.S. Government and technology industry policy and investment set a precedent that has since been used as an example by several other countries in the development of their own policy strategies on AI, though much more work remains to be done.

More recently, at the Partnership on AI (PAI), I had the opportunity to bring these values to life within the organization as we built it from the ground up. Upon my hire as the Founding

Executive Director, I led an immediate effort to diversify our Board of Directors and implemented policies in support of diverse hiring for our staff. Our organizational mission statement is “Bringing diverse voices together across global sectors, disciplines, and demographics so developments in AI advance positive outcomes for people and society,” and our program work is squarely focused on ensuring that AI technologies empower humanity by contributing to a more just, equitable, and prosperous world. I’m proud that under my leadership, the Partnership on AI grew to a strong coalition of over 100 global organizations, spanning 13 countries and representing many diverse equities. Our community includes many organizations whose critical work is expressly focused on issues of equity--priorities we collaborate with them to directly support.

PAI’s own [research and standards work](#) is focused on a wide array of areas, but improving equity outcomes stemming from technology development and enhancing representation of voices traditionally underrepresented in technology policy conversations is a cross-cutting priority through all of them and a primary aspect of our operating model. Our largest investments including those in issues directly aimed at tackling algorithmic discrimination; ensuring that economic gains brought by AI are widely distributed and not reinforcing existing inequalities; enhancing algorithmic transparency in service of a wide range of public interest goals; addressing the inappropriate use of algorithmic assessments in high-stakes domains (with a principal focus on the use of risk-assessment tools in the criminal justice system); and addressing the attrition of women and minoritized individuals in the technology industry through systematic research of the problem in a way that has not been conducted before.

I also sit on the Steering Committee of Stanford University’s AI Index, in which volunteer capacity I work with stakeholders in academia, government, and industry to organize more systematic disclosure of diversity data in the AI field--including in student and faculty representation in academic programs and in the technology workforce.

**5. If elected, would you be willing to meet occasionally with the leaders and/or memberships of the groups below during your tenure?**

I consider it an important part of the role of an Overseer to listen to and engage regularly with the Harvard community, and given the importance of diversity as a priority to Harvard, would be very happy to connect with related alumni and interest groups.

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