

BSA Involvement in LEAPS Grant Collaborations

What is LEAPS?

NSF LEAPS: Leading cultural change through Professional Societies (LEAPS) of Biology
[Dear Colleague Letter](#)

Focus is on:

- Developing collaborative networks to facilitate CULTURAL CHANGE in biological sciences
- Focus on using evidence-based practices to remove barriers for individuals historically excluded from science
- Expected outcome is a community of biologists (and community leaders) that more fully reflects the demographic constitution of the US population

Background

Since the Dear Colleague Letter regarding LEAPS was issued received many email invitations regarding potential collaboration on LEAPS proposals. A small **Ad Hoc Committee** was formed to deal with these discussions and formulate recommendations for BSA's response to LEAPS.

Chelsea Specht (Current BSA DEI Director-at-Large)

Ann Sakai (Former BSA DEI Director-at-Large, PI for PLANTS I and PLANTS II grants)

Anna Monfils (coPI PLANTS II, PI for PLANTS III under development, DEI committee member, former Education committee member)

Michael Donoghue (BSA President-Elect)

Catrina Adams (Education Director)

Heather Cacanindin (Executive Director)

We decided as a group that **BSA would NOT be putting forward its own proposal for LEAPS**. With Wanda Lovan (financial and grant management) retiring in July and Catrina working to wrap up two grants and starting a new one, plus the current work on writing the PLANTS III proposal which was in development, a LEAPS proposal was not doable for BSA in the short timeframe.

Funded LEAPS Collaborations with BSA

RCN: LEAPS: Rooting Out Oppression Together and SHaring Our Outcomes Transparently (ROOT & SHOOT)

Who: ASPB leads (Mary Williams, Crispin Taylor)

Collaborators: American Phytopathological Society (APS), the American Society of Plant Taxonomists (ASPT), the Botanical Society of America (BSA), the International Society for Molecular Plant Microbe Interactions (IS-MPMI), the Maize Genetics Cooperation (MGC), and the North American Arabidopsis Steering Committee (NAASC).

BSA Steering Committee members: Catrina Adams, Chelsea Specht

Amount: \$2,141,750

Start: 10/1/2021

Description: The ROOT & SHOOT program was collaboratively designed to accomplish three major aims: first, to immediately address known key systemic barriers to full participation within

each organization; second, to require the partner organizations to dig deeply into themselves and build more equitable and inclusive structures; and third, to allow the plant science community to identify bold new directions that will continue expanding participation and provide a system of coordination of the required labor and sharing of ideas, practices, and outcomes (community-based working groups). The award also will provide broad training of the plant science communities in equitable practices and operations, including inclusive teamwork, climate and culture assessment, and culturally responsive mentoring.

RCN: LEAPS: Culture Change for Inclusion of Indigenous Voices in Biology

Who: AISES leads - Kathy DeerinWater (AISES) and Teresa Mourad (ESA)

Collaborators: Botanical Society of America, Ecological Society of America, and Entomological Society of America

BSA Steering Committee members: Anna Monfils, Chelsea Specht

Amount: \$1,543,276

Start: 10/1/2021

Description: AISES proposed a five-year project, Culture Change for Inclusion of Indigenous Voices in Biology, referred to as Indigenous Voices, to drive organizational culture change among biology professional societies to transform how these societies engage with Indigenous scholars and communities and improve their inclusion in biological research and professions. AISES in partnership with three closely aligned biological professional societies plans to: 1) assess the current status of Indigenous inclusion within the organizations, 2) address structural barriers and build Indigenous communities within the organizations, and 3) expand relationships and understanding to fundamentally improve Indigenous representation within biology research and professions. The proposed LEAPS project represents a new collaboration between AISES and BSA, ESA, and EntSoc to advance efforts among all organizations to increase the inclusion of Indigenous peoples, culture, and values in biology, recognizing the unique identities and circumstances of Indigenous peoples in the United States and the implications for education, research, and workforce development through the lens of Tribal Nation Building.