



A Guide to Creating Relationships with Underrepresented Communities in STEM

Are you interested in being more inclusive in your group professionals and want to reach out to underrepresented communities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) in your area? Do you want to build a long-lasting relationship and partner with organizations for the common goal of making STEM more diverse and inclusive? That's great! At the American Chemical Society, we believe innovation in the chemistry enterprise happens when scientists from different backgrounds, identities, and lived experiences come together to solve the world's most pressing challenges. We encourage collaboration and celebrate when our members do their part in creating a more equitable, inclusive, and diverse chemistry enterprise where everyone is working together. We want everyone to experience the transforming power of chemistry.

Before you started connecting to marginalized and underrepresented communities in your area, consider these questions:

1. Who am I trying to reach?
2. Why am I trying to reach out to them?
 - a. It's worth exploring your intentions for reaching out. If it's simply to say that you've reached out to "diverse populations", that isn't a good enough reason. If you want to build long-lasting relationships with a group of people who you think have interesting and innovative ideas, perspectives, and visions for STEM that are missing from your group, then that is a wonderful reason to start reaching out.
3. Could an ACS Partner (see below) already have connection with that community?
 - a. Look up the organization's website to see if they have a local chapter.

If yes,

Has my local section gotten involved with their local chapter in the past?

- i. How did that relationship go?
- ii. Do I need to start the relationship fresh or pick up where things got left off?

If no,

Reach out to diversity@acs.org. Staff at the ACS Office of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Respect (DEIR). See tip #2 below for more details.

After you've considered the questions and know why and how you are going to reach out a community, keep in mind these tips:

1. You may be thinking of inviting people from an underserved community to an event you're hosting. Don't let the invitation go cold after the event is done! Foster a true partnership with the community. You should think of the invitation as the beginning of a new relationship to be nurtured throughout the year. If you work with an ACS partner organization, think about having more events together. You should reciprocate and attend their events. Build trust with the communities in your area. Let them know it's not a one-and-done.
2. Your partners at the ACS Office of DEIR can help connect you with local chapters of partner organizations or give you other suggestions to help you with your journey. They will also give you tips on how to best engage with groups, as each community is different. Reach out to diversity@acs.org and share with them who you would like to reach, where, and for what event. If you aren't sure, share that too. They can make some recommendations, be a trusted connector between you and a partner organization and answer any questions you may have. They are there to help and support you.

ACS has longstanding relationships with many organizations with whom ACS has formal agreements on partnerships. You may find these partners on the ACS Diversity Partner Organizations sheet found on www.acs.org/diversity