

Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee
ECR rep: Kevin Cope

1) In the broadest sense, what are the responsibilities of your committee?

The Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Committee is fully committed to **ensuring that every plant scientist, no matter their background (including race, ethnicity, sexual identity, religious or political views, ability, age, etc.) has full access to all that ASPB has to offer.** We seek to identify and then eliminate or restructure practices or processes within the society that inhibit the ability of anyone to fully participate.

2) How many hours per month of commitment does it take?

Committee meetings typically occur quarterly, but sometimes monthly, and last around one hour each. During these meetings, issues are discussed, solutions are identified, and assignments are made. Much of the work occurs outside of the committee meetings and is reported on at subsequent meetings. ECR reps can control how involved they want to be but attending meetings and volunteering to complete a few assignments throughout the year is expected. The time commitment increases leading up to the annual Plant Biology Conference. For example, all EDI committee members review travel grant applications (around 40) and provide feedback based on an established rubric. In addition, the ECR reps on the EDIC have traditionally organized a workshop for the conference (e.g., a career workshop).

3) How can ECR reps influence the functioning of the committee?

ECR reps can play a huge role in controlling the direction that the committee goes, but this is based on how active and vocal you are. From my experience, all committee members view the **ECR reps as full-fledged members of the committee and are very respectful of what we have to say.** However, some things the committee does are determined by upper leadership, and few committee members can control or influence them. But examples of this are extremely limited.

4) Do the ECR reps have an equal “say” in matters/ decisions?

Yes. See the above response.

5) What have you learned by serving on this committee?

That ECR reps are a vital part of the committee and can be very influential (depending on their level of involvement). Similarly, the EDI committee plays a pivotal role in setting the tone for the rest of the society and helping improve accessibility for all plant scientists. I saw legitimate changes brought about in the society at large based on discussions that originated within the committee, which was extremely rewarding!