



Tanz Centre for Research  
in Neurodegenerative Diseases  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

*"I (we) wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land."*

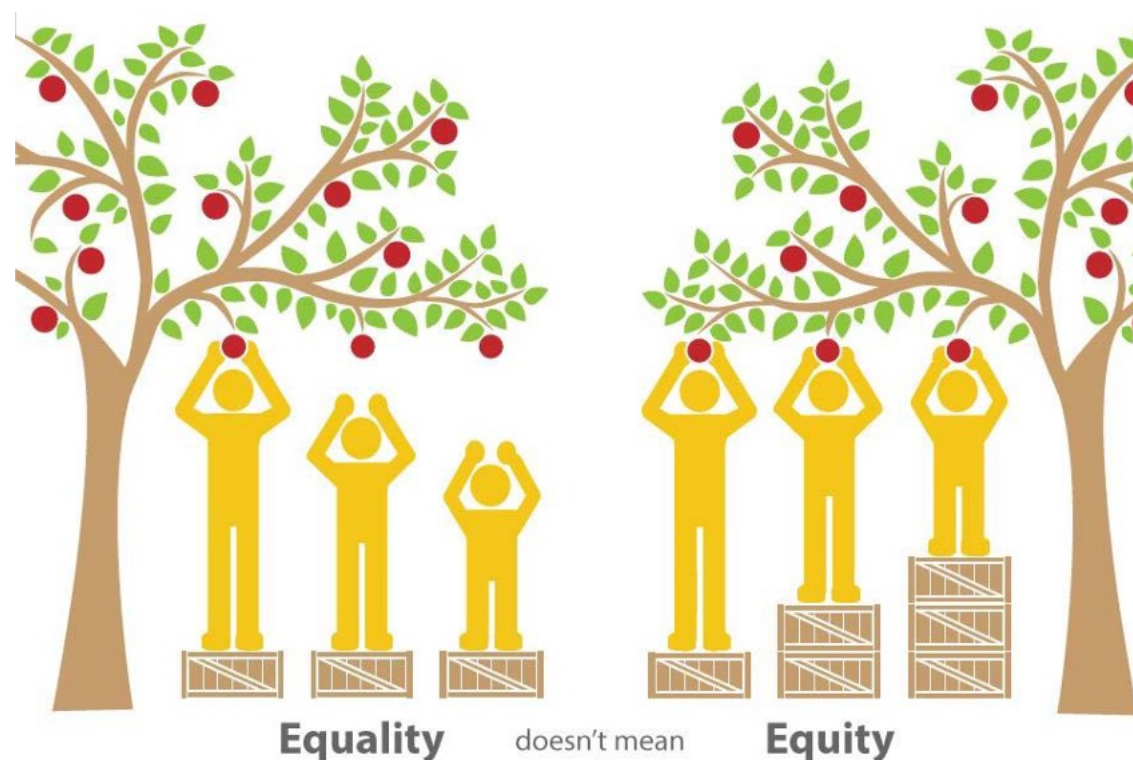
Equity, Diversity &  
Inclusion at Tanz  
EDI@T  
Committee

# What is “EDI”?

**Equity:** the fair and respectful treatment of all people; reduction of disparities and barriers faced by underrepresented groups

**Diversity:** the demographic mix of the community, with a focus on the representation of equity-seeking groups

**Inclusion:** the creation of an environment where everyone feels welcome and is able to fully participate



ANIMALS

## Female Birds Sing, Too

Science is better when it is inclusive

By Lauryn Benedict, Matt Wilkins on May 1, 2022



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](#)

Animal Behaviour

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/anbehav](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/anbehav)

The role of diversity in science: a case study of women advancing female birdsong research

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<sup>a</sup> Department of Biological Sciences, University of Maryland, Baltimore County, Baltimore, MD, U.S.A.

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*“Female birds sing, Too! Our need to declare that fact so emphatically matters because it reflects historical biases and the constant adjustments of the scientific consensus as new facts are available and new voices are added to the conversation. We welcome a future where research, communication and education combine to improve our understanding of the world around us and deepen our connections to each other and the natural world” **Why We Didn’t Know That Female Birds Sing, Scientific American 2022** doi:10.1038/scientificamerican0522-10.*

# What are we going to do?

## Purpose of the Committee

The purpose of the EDI@T Committee is to discuss and address issues related to EDI within the centre. While an equitable, diverse and inclusive environment is a **shared responsibility** of all Tanz faculty, staff and learners, the committee was formed to **coordinate efforts**. Using its shared expertise and experience, the committee will identify EDI-related issues at the Tanz, propose initiatives and monitor the effectiveness of these efforts.

The Tanz Centre for Research in Neurodegenerative Diseases at the University of Toronto is committed to the principles of diversity, inclusion and equity in all that we do<sup>1</sup>.

This includes:

- recruiting and retaining learners, staff and faculty that reflect the diversity of Canadian society,
- creating, supporting and maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination, harassment, intimidation, bullying and disrespectful behavior, and
- assuring that our programs and curricula prepare our members to meet the needs of the diverse communities they will serve in their careers in Canada and around the world.

# Who are we?

## The EDI@T committee:

- Includes ~10 faculty, administrative staff, Research Associates, Research Technologists, students and other Lab Personnel
- Strives to reflect all types of diversity within the centre including gender-balance, cultural diversity, educational background, work location, and career position.
- will recruit additional members to maintain the above demographics as well as ensure representation of all specialties within Tanz.

	Number
Faculty	1
Students	
Undergraduate	1
Graduate (MSc, MHSc, PhD)	2
Postgraduate	2
Research staff	3
Administrative staff	1



Naomi Visanji, Chair



Louis Chan, Business Manager



Jenny Griffin

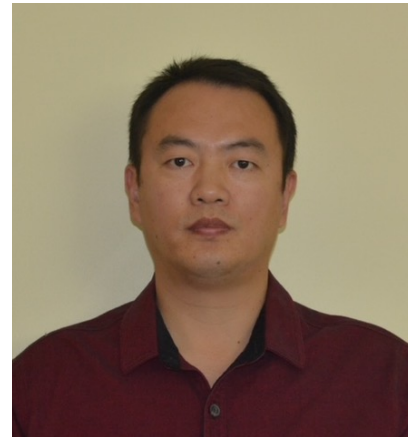


Ain Kim

- **Ari Berlotserkovsky**
- **Lauren Levy**



Philip McGoldrick



Meng Tian



Anna Vasilevskaya

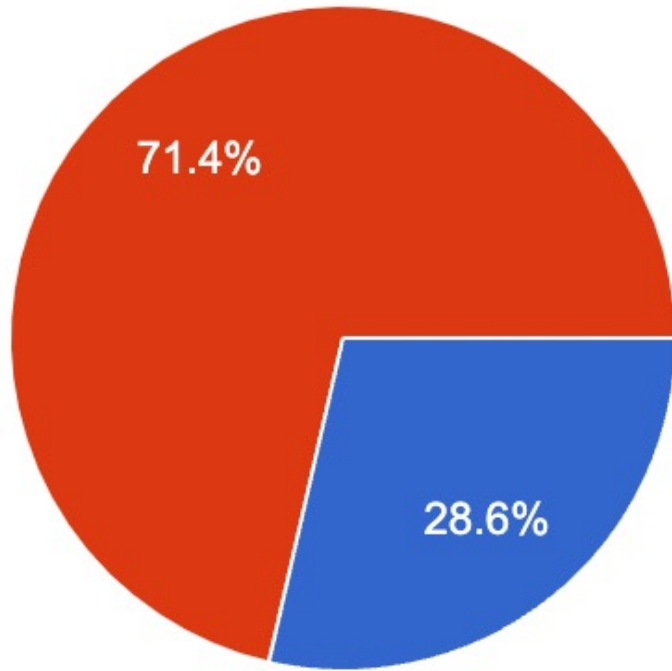
## Some of the projects we're working on:

- EDI culture survey
- Positive Space Campaign
- Unconscious bias training
- Community outreach and engagement
- Physical accessibility of the space at the Tanz CRND

# Tanz EDI Culture Survey

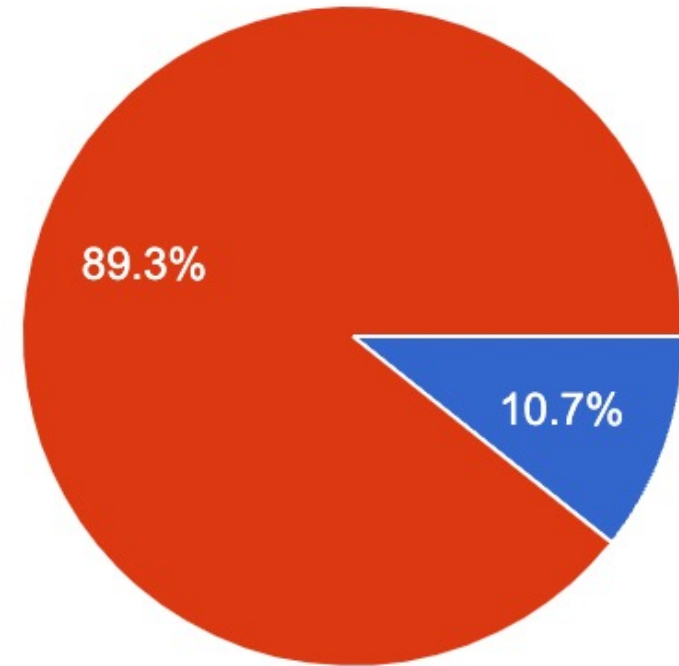


Have you experienced any **unwelcome comment(s)** or conduct at Tanz CRND that you felt was offensive, embarrassing, or hurtful (e.g., inappropriate jokes, slurs, rumors, hurtful gossip, isolating behaviors)?

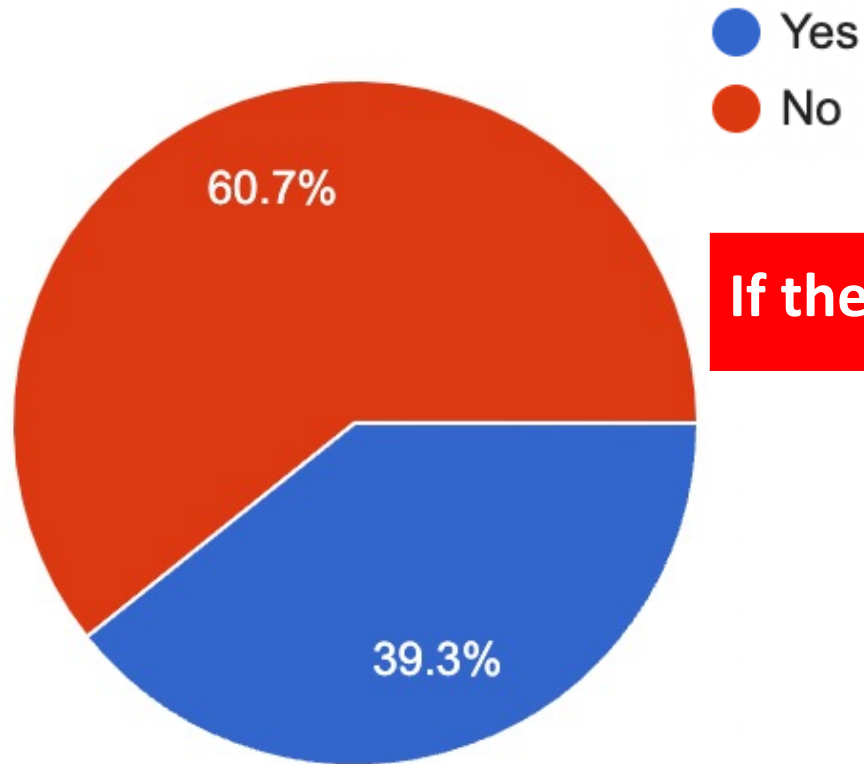


Have you experienced any **discrimination** (i.e., unfair, negative, or adverse treatment) at Tanz CRND based on one or more aspects of your background or identity (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, etc.)?

● Yes  
● No



If you were to experience discrimination in the future, **would you feel confident in your ability to pursue remediation?**



**If the answer was No**

What would make you feel comfortable to pursue remediation?

1. Confidentiality of the reporter's identity (57.1%)
2. Complete anonymity of the reporter's identity (50%)
3. Presence of an anonymous ombudsperson (42.9%)
4. Presence of a formal reporting system (39.3%)
5. Nothing – I will never feel comfortable (14.3%)
6. Other (7.1%) - Resolution by discussing the issues in the presence of a neutral third party (privately and in confidence)

What is Tanz CRND **doing well** in terms of building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment? Please write your thoughts in the text box below.

- ✓ Diversity of the Tanz CRND members and their respect towards other cultures and languages
- ✓ Respectful and courteous people

How can Tanz CRND **improve** in terms of building a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment? Please write your thoughts in the text box below.

- Training for staff/students on how to work cooperatively with others
- Educational presentations about what is and is not acceptable in our community - jokes, manner, treatment, etc.
- More opportunities to network within the centre
- Presence of a formal anonymous reporting system with an external oversight
- More learning experiences to prevent toxic work culture
- To increase diversity at the Tanz CRND, job postings should be pre-screened for unbiased and inclusive language, and posted broadly to reach a diverse audience, including on Twitter.

# Unconscious Bias



# Unconscious Bias

Unconscious assumptions, beliefs, attitudes and stereotypes that human brains have about different groups, which affect how we perceive and respond to people



(Canadian Women & Sport)



# Unconscious Bias

- Everyone has them
- They can be activated within a fraction of a second
- We can hold biases against our own group
- We can hold biases that go against our stated beliefs
- Biases are generally shared within social groups, though people also have biases favouring people who share their identities
- Biases are persistent, but can be changed with attention and work



## Affinity Bias

Feeling a connection to those similar to us



## Perception Bias

Stereotypes and assumptions about different groups



## Halo Effect

Projecting positive qualities onto people without actually knowing them



## Confirmation Bias

Looking to confirm our own opinions and pre-existing ideas.



Affinity bias



Confirmation bias



Attribution bias



Anchor bias



Nonverbal bias



Authority bias



Conformity bias



The halo effect



The horns effect



Overconfidence bias



Status quo bias



Perception bias



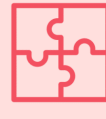
Contrast effect



Gender bias



Ageism bias



Illusory bias



Affect heuristic



Recency bias



Name bias



Beauty bias



Height bias



Idiosyncratic rater bias



**Unconscious biases prevent us from seeing fairly and accurately the information or the people in front of us.**

**Unconscious biases systematically disadvantage already disadvantaged people and provide un-earned advantages to those already advantaged.**



# Unconscious Bias Training

<https://people.utoronto.ca/memos/unconscious-bias-training-modules/>

Log in using UToR ID, “Assign Course” to self  
COURSE UBM-2000 (takes about 30 minutes)

<https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/lms/e/bias/>

CIHR video – required for grant reviewers

<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

Implicit Association Testing: ability to distinguish one group from another  
.e.g. I have an implicit preference for recognizing younger faces over older  
faces



# Positive Space Campaign

**You are** [red bar]  
**a part of our** [orange bar]  
**community.** [yellow bar]  
**The University of Toronto** [green bar]  
**is an LGBTQ\*** [blue bar]  
**Positive Space.** [purple bar]

**We need you to create Positive Space...** [red bar]  
a welcoming and inclusive environment [orange bar]  
a space that is free from discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression [yellow bar]  
a place where we challenge homophobia, transphobia and all forms of oppression [green bar]  
a campus where we take action against hateful and discriminatory language, behaviour and attitudes [blue bar]  
where students, staff, faculty, alumni and members of the University can build this LGBTQ-inclusive community [purple bar]

\*LGBTQ = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer  
Poster adapted with permission from OCASI





# Safe Space – Lab Accessibility





# Working Safely I

- Your well-being, health and safety are the highest priority.
- You should feel competent and secure to perform any procedures or work with any equipment in the lab. If unsure \*please always ask\*. If you have not used equipment in a while, ask for a review/refresher.
- Lab safety manuals are the best source of safety information
- EMERGENCY 416-603-5800 X5555 for outside lines and X5555 for internal lines.

# Working Safely II

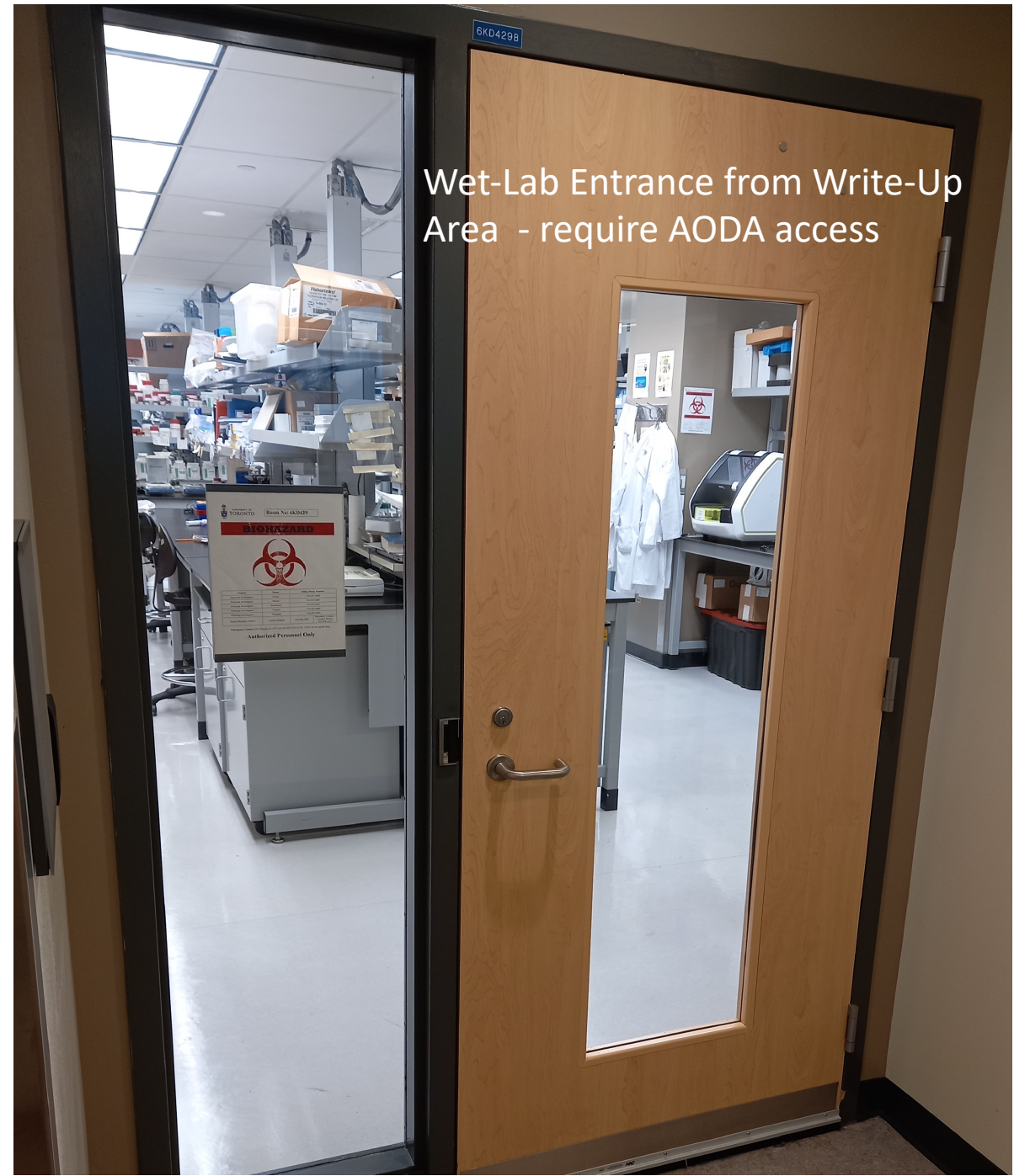
- After hours work- this is not required but is sometimes a reality of biological research.
- Work with biological agents is best performed during regular hours since help is readily at hand if you encounter problems.
- If working late/after-hours consider coordinating with a buddy
- UofT Safety resources <https://safety.utoronto.ca/personal-safety/>
- If you have any concerns consult your PI or any member of the EDI@T



Write-Up Entrance from 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Elevators – require AODA access



Wet-Lab Entrance from Write-Up Area - require AODA access







Entrance from 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Freight Elevators - might require AODA access



Wheelchair Washroom at the back of the 6<sup>th</sup> Floor Lab - require push open button

# Next Steps:

- Preliminary discussions with UHN and UofT for AODA automated access doors
- UHN informed it is not a simple solution as this requires electrical work and the doors themselves may need to be switched out
- Other Accessibility issues are to be determined like website for visually impaired

# Community Outreach Initiatives

**We believe that supporting scientific outreach is one of the ways in which we can live out our values in EDI while supporting and inspiring young scientists in our communities.**





Through unique learning programs and services, we engage children and youth in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), motivating and empowering youth to fulfill their potential and prepare for their future careers and roles as citizens.



We build thriving communities by empowering lives through mentorship. We can help prevent the physical and mental effects that childhood trauma can lead to. We can also mentor high school students to inspire students to envision themselves beyond high school.



High school outreach team encourages high school students to pursue careers in STEM fields and through engaging and information presentations, we educate high school students across GTA of the diverse opportunities. The team engages in high school conference and mentorship.



# Further Ideas...

## The High School Outreach Initiative



The High School Outreach Initiative aims to raise awareness about organ donation and transplantation throughout high schools in the Toronto area. The project is a joint effort of the [University of Toronto Transplant Institute](#) and the Trillium Gift of Life Network (Ontario Health), and includes health professionals from UHN, St. Michael's Hospital (Unity Health Toronto) and Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids). The initiative brings together staff, patients, and donor families to share their first-person transplant stories with high school students.

- ▶ To book a presentation at your high school, please complete the [booking form](#)
- ▶ Download the [Letter to Teachers](#)

Includes  
mentoring!

To inquire about high school visits to the Ajmera Transplant Centre, please contact Anna Cocco, Education Coordinator at [anna.cocco@uhn.ca](mailto:anna.cocco@uhn.ca) or 416 340 4800 ext. 6315

## CPIN Volunteer Teaching Opportunity: NeuroSci 101

### CPIN High School Outreach Program: NeuroSci 101 - Call for Volunteer Lecturers

**NeuroSci 101** (<http://www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/events/course.htm>) is a neuroscience course for high-school students and an integral component of the outreach program organized by the CPIN since 2010. The course has been instrumental in successfully introducing neuroscience concepts to young minds in an accessible manner, as well as preparing participants for the Toronto Brain Bee competition (<http://www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/events/brainbee.htm>). Over the years, the contribution of CPIN student and postdoctoral members has been critical to the success and acclaim that the neuroscience course has achieved.

For this academic year (2022-2023, NeuroSci 101 will run virtually from October 24th, 2022 to March 2023. The series will cover 12 lectures plus 2 review sessions (<http://www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/events/course.htm>). Volunteer teachers will gain valuable teaching skills by designing and delivering an interactive lecture to high-school students in an area related to their research interests.



## Other organizations we aim to reach out to:

BRITE (Black Researchers Initiative to Empower): A collective of Black research-based graduate students focused on fostering community and support.

Connections: a safe space for Black self-identifying women to communicate without interference.

**Any other organization recommendations/suggestions/or if you would like to participate please email us at [crnd.edi@utoronto.ca](mailto:crnd.edi@utoronto.ca)**

Please also be on the lookout for our communications including a survey outlining TEDI's current ongoing projects to gain your feedback.

## You'll be hearing from us:

- raise awareness of the importance of inclusion, diversity and equity in the Tanz centre,
- identify gaps, formulate and prioritize objectives, and develop initiatives to address these concerns,
- communicate and embed EDI practices in the Tanz culture,
- inspire and advocate for cultural changes at Tanz where needed,
- Serve as a local resource for EDI-related questions and concerns at the Tanz

**We'd like to hear from you:** Contact Us: [crnd.edi@utoronto.ca](mailto:crnd.edi@utoronto.ca)



# Questions, comments, Pizza!

[crnd.edi@utoronto.ca](mailto:crnd.edi@utoronto.ca)

