Institution Safety Plan
Prepared by the WHOI MC&G URGE Pod 1

We want to note that WHOI has a responsibility not just to members of the WHOI community, but to the international community of oceanographers that utilize our institution aboard our research vessels and as visiting scientists, to put in place a comprehensive safety plan such as the one suggested below. We urge WHOI to engage in a broader conversation with UNOLS and other oceanographic institutes to implement a shared safety plan that prioritizes consistency and transparency around employee training requirements, reporting, systems of support and penalties for harassers that are enforceable in the field and at the institute. We suggest it should be within the role of the DEI Officer or Assistant at WHOI to perform a yearly audit of the safety plan to examine what can be improved and implemented each year to improve the safety of all WHOI employees, particularly those with minoritized identities.

The following are suggestions for in the field and at the Institution:

**In the Field:**

- Commitment, expressed to all shipboard/field scientists, by Chief Scientist that they will report complaints of inappropriate behavior/harassment to the offending participants home institution immediately upon end of fieldwork
- Harassment and bias training at the beginning of each fieldwork expedition for all participants
- Start a “fieldwork safety and inclusivity” discussion group for scientists who are/plan to be leaders of field expeditions
  - Frame this as a leadership training, part of being a better scientist
  - By making this a non-mandatory discussion group framed around improvement and leadership, we avoid the resentment and dismissal that can come with mandatory trainings, and promote a culture change around the important qualities of a good leader.
- Suggest that PI’s make themselves aware of risk of locations where fieldwork is to be carried out (e.g. discrimination laws, others known to have experienced discrimination at the same site) by researching and talking with other people who have done research here, as applicable.
This information will then be shared with the participants before departing for the fieldwork.

At the Institution:

- At the end of each “WHOI Headlines” weekly email, include a link to WHOI’s policy on reporting improper conduct
  - Repeatedly sharing this information as part of a weekly institution newsletter not only informs people of their options for recourse, but also helps normalize the reporting process as part of a safe institution
- Require the PI of each lab, leader of each group or Department, etc. to submit to the DEI Coordinator yearly a version of their group’s safety plan, signed by each member of the group
  - This safety plan includes acknowledgment of the group’s discussed code of conduct, and processes for recourse
  - Newly onboarded members of each group must also sign this
  - DEI Coordinator or member of HR makes themselves available to be present during these discussions

Existing Resources:

- WHOI’s policy on reporting improper conduct linked here
  - Individuals who wish to non-anonymously report improper conduct are to do so through the chain of command in the following order: (1) their supervisor, (2) either the Vice President for Finance and Chief Financial Officer or the Director of Human Resources, (3) the President and Director
  - In situations where individuals choose to remain anonymous, they may use the WHOI Ethics Hotline: 1-866-868-0920
    - “Information provided through the Ethics Hotline will be shared with the Institution’s EEO Officer/Title IX Coordinator by EthicsPoint on a completely confidential and anonymous basis… unless the individual allows differently.”
- All new WHOI employees are required to complete Respectful Workplace and Anti-Harassment training via EH&S portal

Summary of Resources & Recommendations for WHOI Departments/Labs Safety Plans

- We recommend seeking support from the Violence and Prevention Office at MIT to receive yearly or bi-yearly anti-harassment and bias workshops (JP Students take this workshop during orientation at MIT)
● We recommend that more WHOI wide resources be made available to provide and periodically mandate antidiscrimination, bystander intervention, and de-escalation training. These are not currently offered through the EH&S portal or elsewhere.

● For all field work sites, include a risk assessment of the safety of the site for team members of color, a pre-departure checklist of discussions within the field team, procedures for documenting incidents in the field, as well as additional required or supported training. This safety plan can (and should be) a work in progress that is revisited and refined.

● We recommend creating spaces for PI's to receive diversity and equity training.

Signatures:

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