



September 8, 2023

**Brown University Commitment to the NASEM Action Collaborative on  
Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education**

In 2018, the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine published its landmark report, [\*Sexual Harassment of Women: Climate, Culture, and Consequences in Academic Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine\*](#), which documented the pervasive phenomenon of sex and gender-based harassment experienced by women students, staff, and faculty in our nation's institutions of higher learning. The report demonstrated that sexual harassment and discrimination have widespread negative consequences across multiple levels in academia: *survivors* have diminished educational attainment and professional advancement and experience negative health outcomes; *bystanders* report more stress and less commitment to their work; and thus, *entire organizations* are damaged when members of the community disengage, withdraw, or leave the institution to avoid becoming the next target.

Sexual and gender-based harassment and its repercussions are an impediment to the mission of Brown University, which is to serve the community, the nation and the world by discovering, communicating and preserving knowledge and understanding in a spirit of free inquiry, and by educating and preparing students to discharge the offices of life with usefulness and reputation. To advance Brown's goals, it is essential that we cultivate and sustain an environment where all students, staff, and faculty can thrive. Members of our campus community must have access to the resources and opportunities they need to be successful without regard to sex or gender identity.

To address and prevent sexual harassment across disciplines and among all people in academia, Brown University has joined with more than fifty institutions nationwide in the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education. Guided by the 2018 NASEM report, the Action Collaborative creates an active space where colleges, universities, and other research and training institutions move beyond basic legal compliance to evidence-based policies and practices at the individual and systems levels for promoting a culture of respect in higher education. Together with the other institutional members of the Collaborative, we will devote time and resources to actively advance the following goals:

1. Facilitate and inform action on preventing and addressing harassment;
2. Share and elevate evidence-based policies and strategies for reducing and preventing sexual harassment;
3. Advance research on sexual harassment prevention, and gather and apply research results across institutions;

4. Raise awareness about sexual harassment and its consequences, and motivate action to address and prevent it; and
5. Assess progress in higher education toward reducing and preventing sexual harassment in higher education.

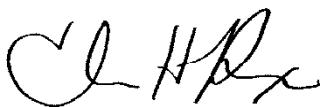
Brown's membership in the Action Collaborative is timely and well-aligned with the University's plan to implement recommendations put forth by the [Task Force on the Status of Women Faculty](#) in April 2023, which include expanding the number of women faculty at all ranks; ensuring equity in compensation, promotion, retention and service loads; developing improved mechanisms to address bias, harassment and misconduct; providing better information and support to faculty on human-resources related issues and improving access to childcare; and enhancing training for department chairs.

Our work with the Action Collaborative will benefit from the participation of faculty and staff with experience supporting individuals who have faced sexual and gender-based harassment in academia:

- Our primary representatives are *Janet Blume, PhD*, Associate Professor of Engineering, Deputy Provost for Strategic Initiatives, and Deputy Dean of the Faculty and *Ebony Manning, JD, LLM*, Title IX Coordinator.
- *Katherine Sharkey, MD, PhD*, Associate Professor of Medicine, Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Human Behavior, Associate Dean for Gender Equity at Alpert Medical School, and Chief of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for Brown Physician's Inc. is serving on the Action Collaborative's Evaluation Working Group.
- Supplementary representatives include *Diane Lipscombe, PhD*, the Thomas J. Watson, Sr. Professor of Science, Professor of Neuroscience, Reliance Dhirubhai Ambani Director of the Robert J. and Nancy D. Carney Institute for Brain Science, and Chair of the Task Force on the Status of Women Faculty at Brown; *Elizabeth McQuaid, PhD*, Professor of Psychiatry and Human Behavior, Professor of Pediatrics, and Vice Chair of Academic Affairs in the Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior; and *Michelle Cyr, MD, MACP*, Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, Professor of Medicine, and Professor of Medical Science.

Brown University is proud to be a member of the Action Collaborative, and we look forward to partnering with other institutions to accelerate progress and leverage our collective influence to prevent harassment and mitigate the consequences for survivors. We commit to support the goals of the action collaborative and call on all members of the Brown University community to work to eliminate sexual and gender-based harassment and discrimination from our academic environments.

Sincerely,



Christina H. Paxson, PhD  
President, Brown University  
Professor of Economics and Public Policy