



## Meeting Summary

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On Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> October, the National Laboratory Women of Color Community Forum held a kick-off meeting to introduce the forum and discuss its structure, goals and potential activities. The event was well attended with 375 virtual participants and a gathering of approximately 20 people at Argonne National Laboratory (ANL) joined by Director of the Office of Science for the Department of Energy (DOE), Asmeret Berhe.

The meeting was facilitated by Valerie Taylor, director of Argonne's Mathematics and Computer Science Division and Forum Chair, who began by providing introductions.

Director of ANL, Paul Kearns, welcomed the attendees and provided a recap of the March 2022 event ("Achieving Equitable Representation for Women of Color at Our National Labs") that led to the National Laboratory Directors' Council (NLDC) endorsing the chartering of this forum.

A central goal of the kick-off meeting was to introduce this community-driven forum and inspire attendees to consider how it might be most useful and effective. To better understand who was in attendance, participants were asked to use their cellphones to respond to multiple polling questions.

From the polling, approximately 60% of the participants identified as women of color while the remaining 40% identified as allies. 37% of participants identified as early-career, 30% as mid-career, 24% as senior career and 8% as senior management (defined as Division Director or higher).

In her remarks, Asmeret Berhe shared her own personal experience of being a women of color while pursuing her education and in her field of soil science. Recalling her approach to her current role, she noted, "every one of us can make a difference and positive contribution," and emphasized a key goal to, "make sure everyone can thrive."

Taylor discussed how the [“Transforming Trajectories for Women of Color in Tech,”](#) report from the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) was the catalyst for the formation of this forum to cultivate a national lab-wide community of women of color and their allies. She also described how [Argonne's demographic data](#) is now being reported using an intersectional approach as a result of the recommendations in the report.

She then provided an overview of forum goals to:

- Cultivate a system-wide community to foster networking, support, and informal mentoring for women of color at the national laboratories
- Increase integration with DEI efforts at the national laboratories
- Provide a venue for information exchange
- Serve as a resource for the NLDC and its working groups

Sandra Begay from Sandia National Laboratories described the objective of the forum to be **member-driven** and **open to all from the national labs and DOE**. She also posed a polling question to gain a better understanding of interests. Participants ranked interest in potential activities as follows:

- establishing an informal mentoring programs (66 votes)
- help with recruiting more women of color (66 votes)
- information exchange (46 votes)
- meeting at conferences when possible (36 votes)
- sharing personal narratives (27 votes)
- Other areas of interest

Following a short q&a session with Dr. Berhe, Taylor invited participant feedback via the [email list](#) and a survey which will be issued soon. There was a lot of participant engagement and enthusiasm to continue to grow this community of women of color and allies at the national laboratories. Before adjourning the meeting, she announced that the next meeting is being planned for January 25, 2023.