Harvard Data Science Initiative Anti-Racism Statement

The Harvard Data Science Initiative and the Harvard Data Science Review share the grief and outrage of people throughout the United States and around the world over the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery and countless other unnamed Black lives. We abhor the racial inequity that is felt every day by people across our country.

We recognize also that data and data science itself are too often used to perpetuate this inequity---facial recognition with disparate error rates, algorithms used to decide where to police, or medical risk assessment tools---to give just some of many examples. As leaders of a broad initiative into data science, we bear a responsibility to address these issues head-on, promoting scholarship that advances ethical data science, as well as building opportunity and eliminating bias across all of our programmatic activities and in our day to day work.

Over the next several weeks, we will work together to identify concrete ways in which we, as a Harvard data science community, can support research programs and education that expose bias in the way data and data science is used, as well as advance research into fair and responsible data science. We also want to take action towards promoting diversity across our governance, research, and education programs.

We have fallen short in addressing these issues. Only by amplifying a multiplicity of voices can we ensure that the young discipline of data science reflects the ideals of equality, equity, and inclusion, and offers opportunity to those who have been marginalized.

We will need your help as we embark on the work we need to do and we welcome your input at datascience@harvard.edu. We look forward to sharing with you an update on our progress and a plan for action later this summer.