



Mind the Gap

Who is a STEM professional? Learn about racial disparities in STEM fields, and join in discussion about how we define the boundaries and requirements of STEM jobs.

Conversation Questions

1. How do we categorize jobs? What are some of the differences between “professional” and support roles? What are some of the barriers to entering “professional” roles?
2. What circumstances have made it harder for Black people to consider, pursue, and thrive in STEM careers paths?
3. Why is equitable representation in professional spaces important?
4. What factors contribute to Black people being more represented in “helping” careers?
5. How can we systemically and individually create more inclusive practices in STEM fields?

Key Definitions (adapted from Merriam Webster)

- *STEM* – science, technology, engineering, and mathematics
- *Implicit bias* - a bias or prejudice that is present but not consciously held or recognized; part of the system of inequity that perpetuates racist policies, practices, and beliefs

Read

“After Years of Gains, Black STEM Representation Is Falling. Why?” by Ashley Smart for *Undark*

<http://bit.ly/3s6U3Tx>

The share of Black students completing STEM degrees was growing until the early 2000s. What went wrong? In this article, Ashley Smart explores the rise and fall of Black representation in STEM majors.





“Race- and gender-based bias persists in US science” Career Brief by *Nature*

<https://go.nature.com/3rX2Mr2>

This article summarizes the findings of a poll run by the Pew Research Center, a think tank in Washington DC, which surveyed more than 2,300 US adults working in science, technology, engineering or math (STEM) jobs.

“The alarming erasure of black women in science textbooks” by Jessie Tu for *Women’s Agenda*

<http://bit.ly/37k1lv2>

This article summarizes a demographic analysis of the most commonly used US biology textbooks.

“The Bias of ‘Professionalism’ Standards” by Aysa Gray for *Stanford SOCIAL INNOVATION Review*

<http://bit.ly/3prSE8k>

In this article, Aysa Gray explores how embedded white supremacy is in standards of professionalism.

“Black workers face two of the most lethal preexisting conditions for coronavirus—racism and economic inequality” by Elise Gould and Valerie Wilson for the *Economic Policy Institute*

<https://bit.ly/37pJbYZ>

This report explores the unique ways that Black communities have been impacted by the current pandemic as a result of historic and ongoing social and economic injustices like access to healthcare, wealth, and housing.

“An Open Letter to Leaders Trying To Improve Diversity” by Andy Ayim for *ThinkGrowth*

<http://bit.ly/3pu6wPk>

Andy Ayim discusses how companies can shift their focus from meeting diversity quotas to creating more authentic inclusion for workers of color.





“Bringing Black History Month to STEM Classes” by Jordan Moeny for *Education Week*

<http://bit.ly/3qqwYdU>

Black History Month is reasonably well-established in language arts and social studies curricula. In other subjects, however, Black History Month tends to be overlooked—but that doesn’t mean it has to be.

Watch

“What Is Bias and What Can Medical Professionals Do to Address It?” from the Institute for Healthcare Improvement

<https://bit.ly/3arKcRX>

Anurag Gupta, MPhil, JD, founder and CEO of Be More America, explains implicit or unconscious bias and how health care providers and others can stop it from negatively affecting people.

“Black, Brown, Bruised: How Racialized STEM Education Stifles Innovation” from Gladstone Institutes

<https://bit.ly/3pvrBcf>

This event was hosted as part of the series Amplified: Race and Reality in STEM. Amplified: Race and Reality in STEM aims to give a national platform to speakers to have candid conversations around race and diversity in the STEM fields.

Listen

“Want to Dismantle Racism in Science? Start in the Classroom” from *Short Wave* for NPR

<http://n.pr/2NxXdk3>

Some of the most prestigious scientists in history advanced racist and eugenicist views. But why is that rarely mentioned in textbooks? Can racial justice and science history be incorporated into a science class? Host Maddie Sofia speaks with reporter Emily Kwong about dismantling racism in science.

