BRIDGE: Enhancing diversity and inclusion in lecture series with broader impacts and mentoring opportunities

**What is BRIDGE?**

BRIDGE aims to increase the visibility of early-career, underrepresented (UR) scientists in the life sciences and related fields, highlight exceptional broader impacts, and facilitate mentoring relationships with grad students. To achieve these aims, we host 3 events:

- **BRIDGE2Science**: traditional technical talk in host department
- **BRIDGE2Impacts**: talk or workshop on broader impacts
- **BRIDGE2Students**: lunch with graduate students

**Why BRIDGE?**

Life sciences has a diversity problem. In order to train the next generation of scientists, we must attract and retain members of UR groups. BRIDGE focuses on departmental colloquia as a platform for achieving this goal. Colloquia provide speakers with visibility, opportunities to share their work, and the possibility of new collaborations. Colloquia also "provide young scholars with models of what speakers look like" (Nittrouer et al. 2018). A lecture series thus offers practical opportunities to harness departmental energy and resources to promote and retain UR scientists.

We provide University data on graduate student and faculty demographics in the College of Natural Sciences for the three initial BRIDGE partner departments and speaker demographics from several years preceding the foundation of BRIDGE. The BRIDGE initiative challenges attrition by promoting space for early career underrepresented scientists with outstanding commitment to broader impacts.

**Outcomes & Testimonials**

"it helped me think about the necessity of networking and how valuable it is in developing future collaborations"

"we still have work to do, and it starts with working together"

**Facilitate Mentoring**

The opportunity to sit down with faculty from another institution in a casual setting

The importance of allyship and community for underrepresented groups

"even the act of community building can be a broader impact"

**Increase Visibility**

Valuable experience building connections

Learn about career options & paths

Able to speak with and see representative people in faculty positions

---

**For more information visit [https://blogs.umass.edu/bridge/](https://blogs.umass.edu/bridge/)**

---

**Interested in learning more about BRIDGE, joining, or expanding to your own chapter? Join us for a panel of graduate student organizers!**

---

**What's in a Seminar?**

Graduate students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst redesigned their departmental seminar series to increase diversity, equity, and inclusion, and other institutions could do the same.


---

**For more information visit [https://blogs.umass.edu/bridge/](https://blogs.umass.edu/bridge/)**