



The International Ombuds Association Affirms its Ongoing Commitment in Support of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education Seattle, WA (October 2023)

The International Ombuds Association (IOA) remains committed to supporting the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) Action Collaborative on Preventing Sexual Harassment in Higher Education's efforts to effect systemic culture change on campuses nationwide. As described by NASEM, the Action Collaborative is convened in the spirit of collaboration to develop new practices, share strategies and resources, advance research, and motivate real action to address and prevent sexual harassment across higher education.

In 2019, IOA, along with other esteemed organizations and institutions, became an early member of this initiative. In the years since, IOA has worked diligently toward the Action Collaborative's goal of achieving targeted, collective action toward evidence-based policies and practices for addressing and preventing all forms of sexual harassment and promoting a culture of civility and respect.

A 2018 NASEM report on Sexual Harassment of Women found that between 20 and 50 percent of women students and more than 50 percent of women faculty and staff experienced sexually harassing behavior while in academia. Research demonstrates that sexual harassment undermines the professional and educational attainment and mental and physical health of people of all genders. It also shows that these consequences are not limited to those experiencing it directly. Bystanders of all genders who experience ambient harassment in their work or education environment are also affected and this in turn affects organizations as employees disengage, withdraw, and leave their work so as not to become the next target. The Sexual Harassment of Women report concludes that system-wide changes to the culture and climate in higher education are needed and provides a roadmap for higher education to make these changes.

IOA hereby affirms its continued commitment to support the goals of the NASEM Action Collaborative. The Action Collaborative seeks to:

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 prevention, and gather and apply research results across institutions; and
5. Assess progress in higher education toward reducing and preventing sexual harassment in higher education.

Dr. Alicia J. Booker,
IOA President 2023-2024

Ellen M. Miller
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The International Ombuds Association (IOA) is a professional association committed to supporting organizational ombuds worldwide. The association's members help others safely navigate conflict and change in corporations, educational institutions, non-profit organizations, government entities and non-governmental organizations across the globe. IOA provides professional development, networking, mentoring and other resources, and advocates for issues impacting ombuds. Learn more at www.ombudsassociation.org (<http://www.ombudsassociation.org/>).