Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Global Biosafety & Biosecurity

## PRACTICAL INTERVENTIONS & MEASURING PROGRESS – THE 7 THEMATIC CLUSTERS

All individuals handling biological materials in the workplace bear a collective responsibility for safe, secure and responsible work. To build effective and sustainable biosafety and biosecurity practices, organizations need to consider how each individual worker, or groups of workers, see themselves as part of this "collective".

Reinforcing and prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) among all biosafety and biosecurity workplaces, at the laboratory bench and beyond, is an important step towards collective accountability and understanding workers lived experiences. Organizations that create and support an environment of belonging, equity and inclusion among all employees are healthier with a strong collective responsibility for reducing biological risks.

An important first step is to ensure organizations and workers have a good understanding of the tangible connections between DEI and biosafety and biosecurity in the workplace setting. The IFBA's Equity Coordinating Committee, together with a panel of international experts, have developed seven thematic clusters which describe these tangible connections and embed DEI within a professional biosafety and biosecurity context. Each thematic cluster, listed below, has been produced with the Delphi method, through analysis of expert-developed examples of workplace interventions illustrating the connections between DEI and biosafety and biosecurity.

Scan the QR code to access the complete set interventions and measurement indicators in the DEI in Biosafety & Biosecurity Implementation Tool
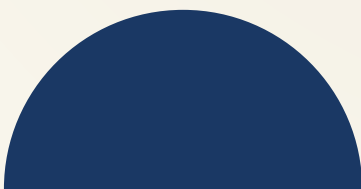
1 CLUSTER 1: Meaningful participation and consideration of a diverse workforce and their equitable access to information results in more effective biosafety and biosecurity decision-making and implementation. Considering everyone in these processes avoids implementation gaps which can impede productivity and sustainable adherence to best biosafety and biosecurity practices.

2 CLUSTER 2: Meaningful participation of a diverse workforce also drives innovation and problem-solving in biosafety and biosecurity, where the addition of different voices provides broader perceptions of risk and a greater variety of strategies or methods to mitigate them.

3 CLUSTER 3: Providing accommodations to workers as needed allows them to fully commit to their scheduled work, and meaningfully participate in shared projects and decision-making. Equitable work environments encourage a sense of belonging, accountability, and common responsibility in workplaces handling biological materials.

4 CLUSTER 4: Recruitment and retention of diverse leaders in biosafety and biosecurity expedites and enhances the benefits of diverse workforces, where DEI may be more sustainably mainstreamed into policy- and decision-making processes.

5 CLUSTER 5: Top-down organizational commitment to best practices in DEI not only contributes to effective human resources management, but also provides model values and code of conduct applicable to the safe, secure, and responsible use of biological materials.

6 CLUSTER 6: An organization's marketing materials and communications, whether externally or internally, that are accessible and representative are seen positively by employees and stakeholders alike, encouraging these groups to feel included, accountable, and to participate in knowledge-sharing and promotion of values.

7 CLUSTER 7: Prioritizing accessible training, professional and career development in biosafety and biosecurity contributes to the cultivation of a diverse future workforce. Professional and career development opportunities that are designed and implemented to suit their diverse audiences are argued to be more impactful or effective in training or preparing professionals to assess and mitigate biological risks.

Accompanying each of these thematic clusters is a set of specific policy, practice and cultural interventions, and associated progress indicators, which may be used to implement and measure progress towards achieving DEI within the biosafety and biosecurity workplace.