PSP4: 2020 Pittsburgh Summer Program for Underrepresented Groups in Philosophy of Science

Abstract
Minorities are extremely underrepresented in philosophy of science, more so than in philosophy. This underrepresentation is in part due to a low proportion of minority individuals among applicants to graduate programs with strengths in philosophy of science. The goal of the 2020 Summer Program for Underrepresented Groups in Philosophy of Science (PSP4) is to attract minority undergraduates to philosophy of science, therefore changing the future composition of philosophy of science. PSP4 will take place at the Center for Philosophy of Science at the University of Pittsburgh. The Center will invite 15 undergraduates to seminars for five days during the second week of July 2020. The Center will cover all expenses of the undergraduate participants (dormitory, travel, and food per diem). Invited faculty are primarily from the Department of History and Philosophy of Science and the Department of Philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh as well as from the Department of Philosophy at CMU.

Basic Information
Project Coordinator(s)
Edouard Machery

Steering Committee
- Morgan Thompson, University of Pittsburgh, History and Philosophy of Science
- Carolyn Oblak, University of Pittsburgh, Center for Philosophy of Science

Funding Amount Requested
$20,000

Expected Project Completion Date
August 2020

Project Description
Only 15% of the membership in the Philosophy of Science Association were women (http://philsci.org/images/docs/PSA_Report_on_Gender_2014.pdf), without change since 2006. No data is available about African Americans in philosophy of science but there are fewer than 150 Black philosophers in the USA, and few specialize in the philosophy of science (Botts et al. 2014. Crit. Philos. Race 2: 224-242).

This underrepresentation is in part due to a low proportion of minority individuals among applicants to graduate programs with strengths in philosophy of science. The goal of this Summer School is to attract
talented undergraduates in these minorities to philosophy of science, therefore changing the future composition of philosophy of science.

The Center for Philosophy of Science aims to invite 15 undergraduates studying in North American universities to attend two seminars a day for five days during the second week of July 2020. We hope to motivate them to apply to graduate programs with internationally recognized strengths in philosophy of science, which would contribute to changing the demographic composition of philosophy of science.

The Summer Program will be open to all types of minorities: female undergraduates, LGBT undergraduates, disabled undergraduates, undergraduates from minority racial and ethnic backgrounds, and other undergraduates from groups underrepresented in philosophy of science, including first generation undergraduates and undergraduates from low Socio-Economic Status. Past coursework in philosophy of science will not be a prerequisite for application to the Summer Program. We will preferentially target Sophomores and Juniors as it is late for Seniors to apply to graduate programs.

The Summer Program will feature two daily graduate seminars and some shorter lectures about core issues and cutting-edge topics in general philosophy of science and philosophy of the special sciences (physics, biology, cognitive science and neuroscience, social sciences). Lunch with as well as one-to-one meetings with the faculty will be organized. Participants will also visit the Archives of Scientific Philosophy and attend a session on applying to graduate school in philosophy. The seminars and lectures will be given by the internationally recognized faculty in the Department of History and Philosophy of Science and the Department of Philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh as well as in the Department of Philosophy at Carnegie Mellon University. One or two visiting faculty will be added to this list. Faculty's participation will be voluntary, and local faculty will not receive any honorarium. The expenses of visiting faculty will be reimbursed.

The application will consist of a cover letter, a CV, and a recommendation letter independently sent by a faculty. The Center will cover all expenses of the undergraduate participants (dormitory, travel, and food per diem).

PSP1-3 were co-funded by the Provost Office at the University of Pittsburgh and the Center for Philosophy of Science as well as by a small grant from the APA and some funding from the Marc Sanders Foundation. The funds committed by the Provost Office will however soon run out, and we are thus petitioning support from the APA. We believe that APA support would put us in a strong position to negotiate further funding from the Provost Office at the University of Pittsburgh as well as the Marc Sanders Foundation.

Project Impact

The goal of PSP4 is to expand on the efforts of the first three Pittsburgh Summer Programs by introducing undergraduates to philosophy of science or by furthering their interests. Diversity in philosophy of science will be improved if the Pittsburgh Summer Program motivates our applicants to apply to graduate programs with strengths in philosophy of science. Alumni of the first three Pittsburgh Summer Programs have applied successfully to such programs, including the Department of History and Philosophy of Science at the University of Pittsburgh, but also at Duke, Oxford, etc. We will assess the efficacy of our program after PSP4 by comparing the applications to graduate programs of applicants accept at PSP and applicants not accepted.
**Project Goals**

Motivate undergraduates to apply to graduate programs with strengths in philosophy of science.

Introduce undergraduates to cutting edge issues in philosophy of science or further their interest in the topic.

Create a community of undergraduates with interests in philosophy of science.

Manifest the commitments of philosophers of science to diversity and inclusion.

**Project Timeline**

October 1: Secure final commitments of Pitt, CMU, and visiting faculty for the second week of July 2020.

December 1: Print 150 PSP4 posters; send posters to departments of philosophy.

December 15: Release Call for Applications (deadline: March 15) on mailing lists; advertise it on blogs and through the APA; send email to 200 departments (including at HBCUs and at other colleges/universities serving minority populations such as Gallaudet University).

February 1: Second call for Applications on mailing lists.

March 1: Creation of the website of PSP3.

March 15: The application’s window closes (Goal: more than 100 applications)

April 1: Notification of Acceptance for 15 students (deadline for their acceptance May 1)

May 1: The final program of PSP4 is published.

May 15-June 1: The Center books travel for students, secures on-campus housing, plans catering needs.

June 1: Readings are sent to students.

July 6-10: PSP4

**Project Outreach**

The Call for Applications will be posted on mailing lists as well as advertised on blogs and through the APA (as was done in 2017, 2018, 2019: https://www.apaonline.org/?diversityinstitutes); emails will be sent to 200 departments (including at HBCUs and at other colleges/universities serving minority populations such as Gallaudet University).

Website will be created with PSP4 on the model of those of previous PSPs, e.g.: [http://www.pitt.edu/~pittcntr/Events/All/psp/psp1.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~pittcntr/Events/All/psp/psp1.html) and [http://www.pitt.edu/~pittcntr/Events/All/psp2/psp2.html](http://www.pitt.edu/~pittcntr/Events/All/psp2/psp2.html).

**Accessibility Plan**

PSP4 will take place at the Center for Philosophy of Science, which is fully accessible for people with limited mobility. Faculty will be asked to ensure that their power point presentations are readable by partially
sighted people. They will also be asked to describe the images used on PPT if vision impaired participants attend the Summer Program. The Center will provide translators in ASL if deaf applicants attend the Summer Program. Accommodations at Pitt will also be tailored to the needs of our applicants.

**Evaluation Plan**

1. Post Summer Program surveys will be distributed to students and to faculty (see attached document) in order to assess the current version of the Summer Program and to improve the future versions.

2. Participants will be contacted on a yearly basis so as to determine whether they applied to a graduate school with strengths in philosophy of science and what their AOS is.

**Online Presence**

A website will be created as part of the Center for Philosophy of Science website. Pictures and announcements will me posted on the Center’s facebook page and Twitter account. A facebook group will be created for participants to PSP4 as has been done for PSP3.

[http://www.pitt.edu/~pittcntr/index.htm](http://www.pitt.edu/~pittcntr/index.htm)

**Budget Narrative**

- **student transportation (plane, cab):** $600 per student for flight on average + $60 of uber from and to airport
- **dormitory:** $27 per night for 6 nights for each student.
- **Breakfast and lunch:** $380 per lunch (for the 15 students, the teaching faculty, the staff and the volunteering graduate students) and $120 for the breakfast per day (for the 15 students and teaching faculty)
- **Per diem:** $75 per day for each student for 5 days.
- **Dinner reception:** $50 for 30 people (Students, faculty, staff, volunteering graduate students)

**Other Funding Sources**

The Center for Philosophy of Science will provide $5,500 if the full budget is covered.