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Gender and ethnic inequity in speaking opportunities at the American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting

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Implicit and explicit biases impede the participation of women and underrepresented minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematic (STEM) fields. Across career stages, attending conferences and presenting research are ways to spread scientific results, find job opportunities, and gain awards. Here we present an analysis by gender (all authors) and ethnicity (United States of America based authors) of the American Geophysical Union Fall Meeting speaking opportunities from 2014 to 2017. We find that women were invited and assigned oral presentations less often than men. However, when we control for career stage, we see similar rates between women and men and women sometimes outperform men. At the same time, women elect for poster presentations more than men. Male primary conveners allocate invited abstracts and oral presentations to women less often and below the proportion of women authors. In contrast to our gender analyses, we show underrepresented minorities were invited and assigned oral presentations less often than other groups across all career stages. Underrepresented minorities elect for poster presentations more than other groups. When we consider the intersection of race and gender, we see underrepresented minority women are invited less often and opt for poster presentations more often than underrepresented minority men and other women. Underrepresented minority women are also assigned oral presentations less often than other women. These results underscore the need to promote women and underrepresented minorities, particularly underrepresented minority women, in scientific conference settings to advance equity in STEM.