



AIHA

Grand Challenges

Executive Summary
Market Research Study Findings 2022

[aiha.org](https://www.aiha.org)

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Project Overview

The American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA) is leading a multi-year, collaborative project with partnering organizations aimed at developing a list of Grand Challenges for Worker Health, Safety, and Well-Being. AIHA engaged Avenue M Group (Avenue M) to conduct a survey of AIHA members on potential Grand Challenges, the importance of investing resources to address these challenges, and specific challenges to include under the larger Grand Challenges.

Grand Challenges have been defined as “ambitious but achievable goals that harness science, technology, and innovation to solve important national or global problems and that have the potential to capture the public’s imagination.” Source: [The White House. Office of Science and Technology Policy. 21st Century Grand Challenges.](#)

Criteria: AIHA is developing a list of global Grand Challenges for Worker Health, Safety, and Well-Being. These Grand Challenges should be...

- Aspirational—they are big, important, and compelling initiatives geared to solving critical world needs
- Solvable—they can be completely or largely solved, with expected progress in 5-10 years
- Measurable—they should have one or more defined, measurable outcomes to gauge progress and completion
- Collaborative—they require interdisciplinary collaboration
- Inspirational—they require long-term sustained commitments and significant innovations in science and/or practice

The survey of AIHA members presented five potential Grand Challenges for Worker Health, Safety, and Well-Being which emerged from focus groups that AIHA conducted in November 2021:

- Address the impacts of the changing work environment (e.g., remote work)
- Improve Exposure Assessment in workplaces
- Mitigate the impacts of climate change on workers (e.g., heat stress)
- Improve equity in workplaces, minimize precarious work situations, and protect vulnerable workers (e.g., gig workers, undocumented persons, migrant labor)
- Eliminate preventable occupational illness, death, and disability

Overview of Survey Results

Below is a **very brief** summation of the survey results.

1. The majority of survey respondents indicated the following three challenges are critical to improving Worker Health, Safety, and Well-Being globally:

- Workplace disease (77%)
- Lack of workplace protections (65%)
- Precarious work situations (60%)

Most respondents also thought the following three challenges were either critical or important but not critical: climate change, racial and gender disparities, and remote work.

2. Of the five potential Grand Challenges for Worker Health, Safety, and Well-Being presented in the survey, **“Eliminate preventable occupational illness, death, and disability”** (90%) was the top challenge selected by respondents. More than nine of ten (95%) of those respondents who selected it also said it is important or extremely important for AIHA and partnering organizations to invest resources in addressing this Grand Challenge.
3. Around three-fourths (76%) of respondents selected “Improve Exposure Assessment in workplaces” as a Grand Challenge. Of these respondents, more than nine in ten (92%) said it is important or extremely important to invest resources in addressing this Grand Challenge.
4. The third top challenge was “Improve equity in workplaces, minimize precarious work situations, and protect vulnerable workers,” selected by about three in five (61%) respondents. Of these respondents who selected this as a Grand Challenge, almost nine in ten (87%) indicated it is important or extremely important to invest resources in addressing it.
5. Half (50%) of respondents indicated “Address the impacts of the changing work environment” should be a Grand Challenge. Of these respondents, nearly seven in ten (69%) said it is important or extremely important to invest resources in addressing this challenge.
6. More than two in five (44%) said “Mitigate the impacts of climate change on workers” should be included in the list of Grand Challenges. Of these respondents, more than nine in ten (92%) said it is important or extremely important to invest resources in addressing this challenge.