

Allen Institute United

Response to “FAQs for Allenites”

Why We Created This Document

We, the Allen Institute United Organizing Committee, created this response to provide clearer, more accurate information about unionization at the Allen Institute. The Institute’s recently circulated “FAQs for Allenites” includes misleading claims and reflects common anti-union talking points. It was produced with the assistance of an outside law firm hired by leadership specifically to discourage unionization. Our goal is to correct the record, provide transparency, and help our colleagues make informed decisions based on facts—not fear. Throughout this document, you’ll find responses grounded in experience, backed by links to relevant legal resources, and written by Allenites who are organizing together to improve our workplace.

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What union is trying to organize Allen Institute employees?

Institute Response:

The union is American Industrial Union (AIU)/United Auto Workers (UAW).

AIU-UAW Response:

We, the Allen Institute employees, are organizing ourselves. We would be affiliated with UAW, which is The International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America.

Even a quick Google search reveals that the *American Industrial Union* hasn't existed since the 1800s. **"AIU" stands for Allen Institute United**, as clearly stated on [our website](https://aiunited-uaw.org) (<https://aiunited-uaw.org>) and in all of our materials. It's telling that the Institute's response chose to portray us as some external organization, rather than what we actually are: a collective of Allen Institute employees organizing together.

* Since the initial publication of their FAQs the institute has removed the American Industrial Union from their response.

Why would AIU/UAW represent a research facility?

Institute Response:

Employees have the right to form, join or assist union organizing, or to bargain collectively through a union of their choosing. The name of the union doesn't necessarily need to reflect the business (ie: research) they represent.

AIU-UAW Response:

AIU-UAW is a collective of Allen Institute employees choosing to represent ourselves for the purposes of collective bargaining, we don't "represent a research facility". We chose to affiliate with UAW because in recent decades, **UAW has become the single largest union for academic and research workers across the US.**

Notably among these are 5,000 University of California (UC) Academic Researchers and the 1,400 University of Washington Research Scientists/Engineers. UC Academic Researchers and UW Research Scientists/Engineers have similar jobs as Allenites. Joining the UAW has allowed UC and UW Researchers to democratically determine priorities as a workforce and has dramatically increased their power to win improved rights and benefits through collective bargaining.

In addition, thousands of other research workers across the country have formed unions through the UAW, and each union has won increases in pay, benefits, and workplace rights.

Is Allen Institute in favor of or against unionization among employees?

Institute Response:

We believe we can best address evolving issues through direct interactions with Allenites instead of through a third party. We work hard to partner with Allenites across the Institute to create, maintain, and grow a culture and community that meets everyone's needs. We do this through a variety of actions including:

1. Communication through The Insider, quarterly all Allenite meeting with updates from Rui and others,
2. Allen Hours to share science knowledge, a variety of learning and development offers,
3. Expanding partnership with RADs to meet the needs of RAs and other roles within the RADs group,
4. Supporting a broad array of Affinity Groups and their offerings,
5. Strong benefits: we review and improve total compensation annually by, among other things, offering competitive pay above the market midpoint to set pay (50% of market is midpoint, we use 60%), competitive time off benefits including the Winter Break for all.
6. More recently we conducted our first engagement survey and, prior to the unionization discussions, decided to roll out activities and action plans based on survey feedback to continue improving our culture.

AIU-UAW Response:

AIU-UAW is not a third party. We are Allenites acting in our own interest.

Unionization efforts have been underway for more than a year, whether Institute leadership was aware of it or not. During that time, Allenites have come together to build community, advocate

for improvements, and identify shared priorities. Many of the positive changes we've seen recently are a testament to what we can accomplish when we act collectively, even without formal recognition.

But collective advocacy can only go so far without the legal power of a union contract. One of the key strengths of forming a union is the right to collectively bargain, allowing us to negotiate meaningful, enforceable improvements and make institute-wide changes through democratic decision making. This process is recognized and protected by federal law*, and it equalizes the power relationship between employees and their employer.

Right now, the Allen Institute administration retains full control over decisions that affect our jobs and working conditions, and they choose when, and if, to listen. Unionizing guarantees us an **equal seat at the table**, backed by legal rights, so that Allenites have a real voice in shaping our workplace.

* <https://www.nlrb.gov/guidance/key-reference-materials/national-labor-relations-act>

Institute Statement 1: only a certain group of employees would be in the union

Institute Statement:

Only a certain group of employees would be in the union, which could result in different pay and benefit structures for union and non-union employees as a result of collective bargaining. We would be bound to a pay structure that is negotiated for the term of the contract, likely 3 years - this would hamper the ability of the Allen Institute to monitor market changes to pay for similar positions and adjust accordingly.

AIU-UAW Response:

We are seeking to form a union of all staff who are contributing to the research mission at the Allen Institute. While the law places some limits on who may be included in an eventual bargaining unit (e.g. certain supervisors and managers), we want to be inclusive and give all Allenites the choice to build collective bargaining power by unionizing.

We intend to win a contract that sets a *minimum* standard, not a cap. Raises, promotions, and adjustments to reflect market conditions can all be negotiated into the contract. And any

contract is agreed upon by *both* the union and the employer. If market-based flexibility is important to us, we can make it a priority at the bargaining table.

The idea that a contract would “hamper” adjustments assumes that change is only possible through unilateral decisions. But many of us have experienced how slow and opaque those decisions can be now. A union gives us a structured, collaborative process to ensure that compensation keeps pace with market trends *and* that those changes are equitably applied.

If we, through our union, secure great pay and benefits for employees within the bargaining unit, and those same standards are not extended to excluded employees such as certain managers and supervisors, that is not a failure of the union. It is a choice made by Institute leadership. We believe that unionization builds a strong foundation for all workers to build power for better working conditions.

Ultimately, a union contract doesn’t block progress; it ensures progress is shared.

Institute Statement 2: Direct Relationship

Institute Statement:

The Allen Institute believes that direct relationships with employees, which foster a workplace where everyone feels valued and can bring their whole selves to work, are important. We think that direct interactions are more effective for addressing evolving issues than having a third party involved. The Allen Institute values the flexibility and agility to rapidly improve benefits, update compensation based on changes in the world, and quickly respond to issues that employees think are important.

AIU-UAW Response:

We agree that direct relationships with employees are important, and that’s exactly what a union is. **A union is not a third party; it is *us*, the employees, coming together to speak with a unified voice.** In contrast, the actual third party here is the law firm hired by Institute leadership to discourage unionization, which distances leadership from the people doing the work.

While the Institute highlights its desire to respond quickly and flexibly to employee needs, our lived experience tells a different story. For example, it took more than six months after the most recent employee survey before results were even *discussed* internally, and as of now, the results still haven’t been made transparent across the organization. Promises of agility ring hollow when past efforts have either moved slowly or quietly faded away.

We are unionizing because we believe in the mission of the Allen Institute and want to build a workplace that consistently reflects the values of equity, transparency, and collaboration. A union gives us a formal, lasting structure to ensure our voices are heard, not just in response to crises or surveys, but as a regular and respected part of decision-making.

Institute Statement 3: Membership

Institute Statement:

In virtually every jurisdiction where it's legal to do so, unions require every bargaining unit employee to join and remain a member of the Union, whether they want to or not

AIU-UAW Response:

What the Institute may be trying to say here is that collective bargaining agreements (aka union contracts) benefit and apply to every bargaining unit employee, whether they join as a dues-paying member or not. No one can be required to become a member of the union after we have a contract.

In most contracts, since everyone in the bargaining unit must receive all of the benefits of the contract, non-members are generally required to pay a comparable “fair share” fee, so the cost of representation is shared equally. The inclusion of a similar provision in our contract would be decided on democratically by Allenites.

Institute Statement 4: Dues

Institute Statement:

As a union member (voluntarily or involuntarily) you are required to pay dues every month.

AIU-UAW Response:

UAW membership dues are currently **1.44% of gross monthly income**, and they **cannot be increased without a vote by the membership**. These dues provide us with the **independent resources** needed to effectively represent ourselves. These are resources that are **not controlled by the Allen Institute**.

Importantly, **no dues are paid until we negotiate and ratify our first contract**. That means we don't pay anything until we've had the opportunity to democratically approve what we're getting in return. Again, we would also democratically decide whether everyone in the bargaining unit is obligated to pay dues- or non-member fees- as a condition of employment.

Once dues begin:

- **38% stays with our local union** (that's us!). We collectively decide how to use this portion for things like sending members to conferences, funding educational materials, and paying for legal counsel.
- **62% goes to the international UAW**, which uses those funds for things like:
 - A **strike defense fund** (currently \$500/week plus healthcare for striking workers),
 - Support for **new organizing drives** like ours,
 - **Legal, research, and bargaining support** available to all locals.

Dues are what make our union independent, sustainable, and powerful, giving us the tools to enforce our rights, improve our working conditions, and support fellow researchers organizing at other institutions.

There is also a **one-time initiation fee, which can range from \$10 to \$50 and is set by the membership of each UAW local**.

Who would be covered under the union?

Institute Response:

We don't know yet which positions are being requested to be covered under the union. That would be decided by the National Labor Relations Board or through negotiations with the union.

AIU-UAW Response:

Correct! The positions that are ultimately covered under the union's bargaining unit ("in unit") is decided by the National Labor Relations Board, should we go through the NLRB's certification process. Alternatively, the Allen Institute can also choose to negotiate with our union directly to come to mutually agreeable bargaining unit(s).

If I am in a job title that becomes covered under the union, can I opt out?

Institute Response:

No. Whether you voted for or against unionization, after a union is certified all employees in the bargaining unit are subject to union representation. After unionization Allen Institute would be required to deal directly with the union and employees would need to go through the union to propose changes to compensation, work rules, benefits, and more.

AIU-UAW Response:

If your job title is included in the bargaining unit and a majority of employees vote to unionize, you cannot opt out of being covered by the union contract. The Institute's response seems to suggest that employees can currently negotiate their own individual deals with the Institute, but **that is not the case**. Right now, policies about compensation structure, benefits, and working conditions are set unilaterally by HR and leadership; employees do not have the ability to negotiate these issues separately.

Once the union is certified, however, all employees in the bargaining unit, regardless of whether they voted for the union, benefit from the terms we negotiate in the contract. In our union contract, Allenites will have a voice in shaping and democratically deciding on employment policies which will replace the policies that are currently unilaterally decided on by the Institute. Democratically elected Allenites will represent bargaining unit Allenites for negotiating and enforcing our union contract.

Regardless of membership status, you:

- **Benefit from the contract** we negotiate together (covering things like wages, job security, and leave policies).
- **Have the right to union representation** in situations such as HR investigations, contract violations, or conflicts at work.

A union ensures that we all have a **seat at the table** and that workplace policies reflect the voice of the people they affect, rather than being dictated from above.

For example:

- If Allenites want to allow individual raises *above* the contract minimum, we can negotiate for that.
- What the Institute **cannot do** after we unionize is move to a worse healthcare option, reduce benefits, or change work conditions **without bargaining with us**.

In short: while you can't "opt out" of being represented, you can choose whether or not to become a union member. Either way, you are **protected** by the power of a contract that is shaped by you and your coworkers, not handed down from above.

Can an employee drop out of the Union later if they change their mind?

Institute Response:

No. As noted above, if your job classification is represented by the union, you would remain a union-represented employee regardless of how you feel after a vote. It is extremely difficult to drop out of the union or to decertify the union. In the first year, unionized employees cannot file for decertification. After the first year, employees must lead the legal process of decertification on their own, which almost every union fights against. If the union loses in the decertification process, they may return after one year and mount an aggressive campaign to represent employees through a new election.

AIU-UAW Response:

The Institute's answer misrepresents how unions work. If a majority of employees vote to form a union, that union becomes the representative for all employees in the bargaining unit when it comes to negotiating wages, benefits, and working conditions; just like elected officials represent all constituents, even those who didn't vote for them.

No one is forced to "join" the union in a personal or ideological sense. The union exists to ensure that all employees in the unit have a voice in workplace decisions, and it only continues to exist if the majority wants it to.

If I am asked to sign a union membership card, am I required to do so?

Institute Response:

No, you are not required to sign a union membership card. Signing is completely voluntary.

AIU-UAW Response:

Yes, that's correct, signing a union card is completely voluntary!

Signing an **authorization card** means you are interested in forming a union. It does **not** mean you have officially joined the union, and it does **not** require you to vote a certain way if there is an election. Signing a card only triggers the next step: recognition of our union by the Institute or petitioning the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) for a union election.

Once a majority of us have signed authorization cards, we can ask the Institute to recognize our union. If the Institute agrees, then a neutral third party would confidentially review the cards to verify that a majority of us have authorized the union. Alternatively, we could file for a union election conducted by the NLRB. In an NLRB election, every eligible employee would have the chance to **vote "yes" or "no"** on whether to officially form a union. Voting would be completely voluntary, and how you vote would be entirely your choice, even if you previously signed an authorization card.

Importantly, both your signature on an authorization card and your vote in the union election are completely confidential from the employer. Authorization cards are handled by the union and typically submitted to the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) or another agreed upon neutral third party who keeps the cards confidential, not to the Allen Institute. The union election itself is run by the NLRB, using a secret ballot, just like voting in political elections, so your employer will never know how you voted.

After our union bargains a contract that we vote on democratically to ratify, signing up for union membership will be completely voluntary.

What am I obligated to do if I signed a union card?

Institute Response:

Union authorization cards are used to show interest in union representation. If enough employees sign them, the union can request an election, and, in some cases, the union may ask for recognition without an election.

AIU-UAW Response:

Yup! That's right!

The Allen Institute can choose to recognize Allen Institute United as a union without an election. If this happens, we will select a neutral third party to verify that a majority of us have signed cards authorizing the union to represent us.

What are the benefits of voting in favor of a union?

Institute Response:

We think this is a question our employees are best qualified to answer. Each of you has your own, unique set of needs, goals, and values. Only you can determine whether you want or need to have a union, or others, speak for you. You, alone, are the best judge of what is best for you.

AIU-UAW Response:

We, the employees of the Allen Institute, are the union. The benefit of *becoming* a union is that we can represent our own needs and values through collective bargaining. It will allow us to **speak for ourselves**.

By forming a union, we will be able to:

- Collectively bargain and enforce our own terms and conditions of employment;
- Negotiate on equal footing with the Allen Institute administration for improvements such as salary increases, career development resources, more transparency, better job security, parental leave, retirement benefits, and much more;
- Gain support and recognition for our research contributions commensurate with the close to \$200 million dollars* of research revenue the Allen Institute receives each year;

- Gain a more equitable working environment, including protections from harm due to racism, xenophobia, sexism, and other oppressive systems;
- Empower and increase the collective strength of researchers locally and nationally.

By uniting our voices in solidarity with research and academic workers nationwide, we intend to collectively bargain with the Institute to address our concerns and increase equity for all Allenites.

* <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/912155317>

Can I vote for or against the union if my job title has not been determined to be part of the union?

Institute Response:

Generally speaking, no. Only those employees whose job titles fall within the definition of the bargaining unit that might be represented by the union will be eligible to vote. There may be exceptions if the parties disagree as to who should be eligible to vote, but they are not commonly in play.

AIU-UAW Response:

That's not the full picture. During the union **authorization card drive**, the exact make-up of the bargaining unit(s) has yet to be finalized. While the law places some limits on who may be included in an eventual bargaining unit (e.g. certain supervisors and managers), we encourage any Allen Institute employee - unless you're certain that you meet the legal exclusion criteria, who is supportive of unionizing to sign a confidential authorization card to ensure that we have the strongest possible bargaining unit. If the Institute agrees to voluntarily recognize our union, we would negotiate who is included in the bargaining unit. Or if we file with the NLRB for an election, the bargaining unit will be decided, and if your position is determined to be in the bargaining unit, you will be eligible to vote in the election.

Can supervisors/managers be included in the union being organized by employees?

Institute Response:

No. To eliminate the risk of “divided loyalty,” the National Labor Relations Act excludes supervisors/managers from its definition of “employees” and prohibits the National Labor Relations Board from certifying a unit that includes supervisors. So, the NLRB will not hold an election where the voting group would include supervisors.

AIU-UAW Response:

The Institute’s answer is **partially true but ultimately misleading**.

It is correct that true supervisors and managers, as defined by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) and decisions of the NLRB, cannot be included in the same bargaining unit as other employees and may be excluded. However, the NLRA’s definition of a “supervisor” does not include everyone who has a title like “manager” or who leads a team.* ** Offering feedback, running meetings, or overseeing workflows does not necessarily meet the NLRA/NLRB definition threshold.

Because the Institute, like many workplaces, does not currently have cohesive supervisory job families, we encourage all employees to stay engaged and informed. We don’t believe that all “managers” or “people leaders” here meet the legal criteria for exclusion and are eligible to unionize.

* <https://www.nlr.gov/guidance/key-reference-materials/national-labor-relations-act>

** “(11) The term “supervisor” means any individual having authority, in the interest of the employer, to hire, transfer, suspend, lay off, recall, promote, discharge, assign, reward, or discipline other employees, or responsibly to direct them, or to adjust their grievances, or effectively to recommend such action, if in connection with the foregoing the exercise of such authority is not of a merely routine or clerical nature, but requires the use of independent judgment.” - National Labor Relations Act

If a union is voted in, does Allen Institute Management directly negotiate with the employees that are covered by a union?

Institute Response:

No. If a union were to be voted in, the Allen Institute would be required to negotiate certain conditions of employment with representatives from the union only, not directly with employees. Union representatives are often not employees, but rather trained union negotiators. Sometimes it can also be an attorney-to-attorney negotiation.

AIU-UAW Response:

The union isn't some outside group. It's us.

If a union is voted in, **the people negotiating with Allen Institute management will be Allen Institute employees**, not outside third parties.

Here's how it works:

- After certification, employees in the bargaining unit will **elect a bargaining team** from amongst themselves.
- These representatives will be our coworkers: the Scientists, Engineers, Research Associates, Data Analysts, Project Managers, Techs, and others who know our work firsthand.
- Our union will push for bargaining sessions be **open to all employees** in the bargaining unit so negotiations are completely transparent, however employers usually try to limit employee involvement.

While it's true that our elected bargaining team will be supported by UAW representatives and attorneys throughout the bargaining process, our bargaining priorities, decisions, contract ratification will all be determined by Allenites.

This is worker-powered bargaining, not bargaining done *for* us by outsiders.

This approach is standard for UAW-affiliated workplaces, and it's how we ensure that negotiations genuinely reflect our needs and experiences.

Once certified, Allen Institute employees will have a real seat at the bargaining table, negotiating directly with management about our working conditions; a process protected by federal law that helps level the playing field.

What would happen to _____ (salaries, benefits, working conditions) if employees vote to be represented by a union?

Institute Response:

The outcome of every union election is determined by a simple majority of the voters. Like other elections, 50% + 1 of the voters decide the outcome. It is not the case that a majority of the proposed bargaining unit vote for unionization.

If a majority of the votes opt for unionization, the Allen Institute would be required to negotiate with the union over salaries, benefits, and other working conditions. Negotiations do not come with any guarantees regarding any changes that would be in the final agreement leading to a contract. And management would thereafter be prohibited from making changes to the contract terms or even offering exceptions to any terms agreed upon in a union contract.

More specifically, the Allen Institute could not agree with a single bargaining unit employee that they have a benefit or schedule perk that is not offered to all. This may include wages and benefits, vacation time, flexibility in schedules, and individual agreements.

AIU-UAW Response:

The contract we, the employees of the Allen Institute, negotiate with upper management will set *minimum standards* that the Institute must meet and to create an equitable work environment. Allenites will not bargain for a compensation structure, benefits, vacation time, flexibility in schedule that includes restrictions that don't make sense or that Allenites don't want.

If I was covered by the union contract, would my manager still conduct my annual performance evaluation?

Institute Response:

Managers would continue to conduct annual performance evaluations with employees.

AIU-UAW Response:

That is accurate, but we can negotiate various facets of how performance evaluations occur during bargaining.

How long would it take to get a union contract?

Institute Response:

No one can say with any certainty, but first contracts often take 12 – 18 months from the time the parties start bargaining. Subsequent contract negotiations can also take a long time.

AIU-UAW Response:

While this may be a possible timeline, contract negotiations can be significantly shorter if the employer comes to the table in good faith and does not attempt to drag the process out.

Why does it take so long?

Institute Response:

Drafting a first contract takes a long time because the parties are drafting an important and comprehensive document section by section, sometimes paragraph by paragraph. It's also the document that will set the foundation for contracts to come, so both sides want to be sure it's "just right." Until there's a contract, the Allen Institute will have to maintain the status quo on wages and working conditions.

AIU-UAW Response:

The process can be shortened if the Allen Institute comes to the table in good faith and does not attempt to drag the process out. Additionally, maintenance of the status quo during contract negotiations is a protective measure that prevents employers from altering things like wages and benefits outside of what's "business as usual" (in particular, weakening them), while negotiations are ongoing. Once a collective bargaining agreement is reached, the terms of that contract would replace this status quo.

What is the sequence of events that most likely will happen and how long will it take?

Institute Response:

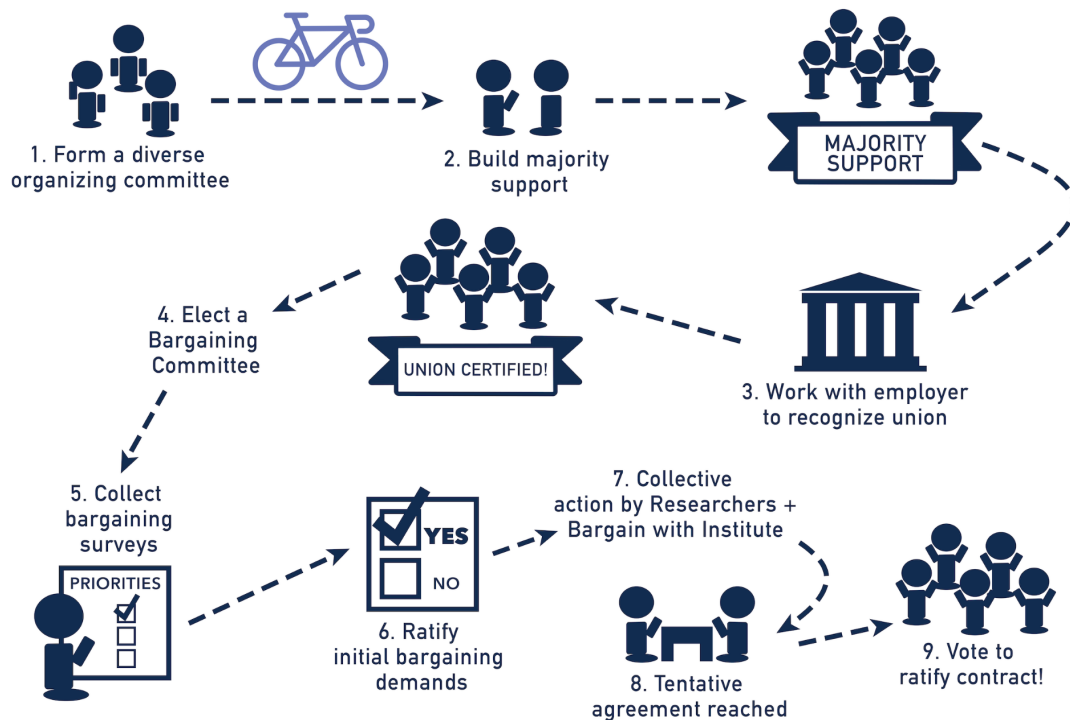
1. Organizing effort (could be open ended until the union files a petition with the National Labor Relations Board to hold a vote)
2. Vote
3. Acknowledgment (vote to accept/deny of union)
4. Contract negotiations (if voted to accept union)

How long it takes to go through this process varies and is dependent on each of the above actions occurring.

AIU-UAW Response:

That is an accurate depiction of the process that commonly happens. There is also an opportunity for the Institute to recognize our union without the need for an election. Our infographic below outlines that alternative process in greater detail.

Allen Institute Researchers' Roadmap to winning our union contract!



How will the role of managers and supervisors change? How will a union contract impact an employee's job?

Institute Response:

Once a union contract is signed, employees will not lose a direct relationship with managers or supervisors. But it will be unlawful for managers and supervisors to deal directly with employees regarding any changes to their wages, hours of work, use of earned time off, or terms and conditions of employment. The Allen Institute would be required to deal solely with the union as the employees' exclusive collective bargaining representative.

AIU-UAW Response:

The Institute's response implies a loss of communication between employees and managers, but in reality, a union contract simply changes *how* certain decisions are made, not *whether* we can speak to our managers. Right now, managers and supervisors are already expected to

follow policies determined unilaterally by HR and senior leadership. A union contract gives us, the employees, a seat at the table to help decide those policies, democratically and transparently.

With a union, we will negotiate with Institute leadership to establish fair, clear, and consistent *minimum standards* for things like wages, leave policies, job responsibilities, and performance expectations. Managers will still supervise, provide feedback, and work directly with employees. The difference is that the rules they follow will be ones we helped create, rather than ones handed down without our input.

If the Institute wants to make changes to our terms of employment, such as altering leave accrual rates, changing overtime rules, or restructuring job duties, it would need to bargain with us. That ensures decisions affecting our working lives are made through mutual agreement, not imposed from the top down.

Ultimately, a union contract ensures fairness and accountability while preserving the day-to-day working relationship between employees and supervisors.

What are “terms and conditions of employment” that must be addressed through bargaining?

Institute Response:

Terms and conditions of employment include, among other matters: wages, overtime, earned time off, medical benefits, retirement benefits, scheduling, disciplinary processes, and vacation bidding. All of these are “mandatory subjects” for collective bargaining.

AIU-UAW Response:

While these subjects must be addressed through the bargaining process, that does not necessarily mean that they will undergo substantial changes. If we are content with our retirement benefits, for instance, we can simply get the terms of those benefits codified in a contract to ensure that all employees continue to receive them moving forward. We can maintain what is working and work to improve what is imperfect. We have no desire to negotiate for weakened rights or decreased benefits.

“Mandatory subjects” of bargaining do include the listed items above. Wages, benefits, and working conditions that impact bargaining unit members require Allen Institute to negotiate with us about them. Currently without a union, Allen Institute has full control over ALL of the terms of Allenites’ employment.

What happens during a strike and when can that happen?

Institute Response:

A strike can happen at any time: prior to and during union negotiations of the first contract and during union negotiations between contracts. A union does not have to provide notice to the employer prior to implementing a strike. During a strike, employees refuse to work for their employer and, therefore, are not paid for the time they are on strike. To the extent possible during a strike, employers do what’s necessary to keep core operations running.

AIU-UAW Response:

Strikes do not happen unprompted and with no input from the workers. Often, strikes happen when contract negotiations break down. Many unions move forward in negotiations with no strikes, and we too hope to avoid them. If a strike seems needed to meet our demands, we would vote on whether we want to initiate a strike and in accordance with UAW Constitution, can **only proceed if two-thirds (2/3) majority of voting members agree.**

Dues money goes into the UAW Strike Fund, which maintains our ability to take strike action if necessary. The UAW Strike Fund pays striking workers benefits of \$500/week and healthcare coverage.

What union activity can happen on site?

Institute Response:

Prior to a union being recognized as the bargaining unit for Allen Institute employees, union activity by non-employees is not permitted on Allen Institute property. This means that it would be inappropriate for union representatives, who are not Allen Institute employees, to be on Allen Institute property for the purpose of organizing.

AIU-UAW Response:

The Institute did not answer its own question. Instead of addressing what union activity can happen on site, they deflected by focusing only on non-employee organizers. This continues a pattern of framing unionization as something driven by outsiders, when in fact, the union effort is entirely made up of Allen Institute employees organizing together to improve our workplace.

As employees, we have the legally protected right* to form, join, or assist a union. We have the right to organize a union to negotiate with our employer over wages, benefits, and working conditions. This includes the right to distribute union literature on non-work time in non-work areas, wear union buttons, t-shirts, or other insignia, talk with coworkers about the union, and ask them to sign union authorization cards.

What can be done at work:

Union organizing is a federally protected activity. The law protects your right to discuss union matters and **distribute union materials during non-work time, such as before or after your shift or during breaks, and in non-work areas like break rooms, kitchens, or parking lots.**

Importantly, any workplace policies about conversations or distribution must be applied consistently. If employees are allowed to talk about personal or non-work topics during work time, then **union conversations cannot be singled out for restriction.**

While it is true that the Institute can control access to its private property and restrict entry to non-employees, that does not limit the rights of employees to organize on-site. Again, this organizing is being done by us, Allen Institute employees, not outside forces.

For more information see: [Your Rights during Union Organizing](#)

* <https://www.nlrb.gov/about-nlrb/rights-we-protect/the-law/employees/your-rights-during-union-organizing>

Can union organizers (who are employees) create their own Teams channel?

Institute Response:

No. Our non-solicitation policy would not allow this for employee organizing purposes, nor is anyone else permitted to do so for the purpose of soliciting for a specific cause.

AIU-UAW Response:

Right, this is a policy that the Institute can set. We do, however, have the right to solicit union support onsite or distribute literature during our free time at work or outside work hours.

For more information on what union activity can happen on site please see: [Your Rights during Union Organizing](#) *

* <https://www.nlr.gov/about-nlr/rights-we-protect/the-law/employees/your-rights-during-union-organizing>

Can an employee be promoted to a manager if they are currently in the union? What happens then?

Institute Response:

Yes, an employee can be promoted to a supervisor or manager and if that occurs, they would no longer be eligible to be part of the bargaining unit, nor would they be entitled to union representation.

AIU-UAW Response:

Yes, employees can be promoted into any position, in or out of the bargaining unit. If the employee is promoted into a position that is not included in the bargaining unit(s), the collective bargaining agreement will no longer apply to their employment. Which Allen Institute job positions are included in the bargaining unit(s) have not been determined yet and will depend on our union certification proceedings.

If I have any questions about this content, who should I reach out to?

Institute Response:

You should reach out to your [People and Culture Business Partner](#).

AIU-UAW Response:

Alternatively, you can reach out to your fellow Allenite colleagues spearheading our unionization effort! You can email us at contact@aiunited-uaw.org, attend one of the FAQ sessions we host, and find us in the cafe for lunch time unionizing office hours! Our website is also a great source of updated information: aiunited-uaw.org.

