

# Mineralogical Society of the UK and Ireland

## www.minersoc.org

## **NEWS FROM LONDON**

Our EDI (Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity) report is complete and can be downloaded from the Mineralogical Society website (www. minersoc.org/EDI-report-2022.pdf). The survey was assembled by a Council-appointed committee of individuals who are either members of Council or who represent the Special Interest Groups (SIGs). The committee includes: J. Lloyd (President), S. Gibson, M.-L. Bagard, E. Deady, J. Horák, H. Pendlowski, F. Cooper, L. Kelly, O. Lord, J. Scarlett, and K. Murphy (Executive Director, Chair). Future versions of this committee will include EDI officers of the SIGs appointed since this process began. Drafts of the survey were made available to members of Council for comment. The survey also drew inspiration from a number of other such survey documents, including that published by EDIG (Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity in the Geosciences), a University College Dublin–based EDI group. Many thanks to them all.

## Key findings

- 75% of people with a mental health condition had experienced discrimination. 62% of people with no such condition had experienced discrimination.
- 47% of men with mental health challenges felt that their workplace was not inclusive.
- 75% of people with a physical health condition had experienced discrimination.
- In terms of ethnicity, it seems clear that people from an ethnic background other than White British, Irish, Welsh, or Scottish (~59%), were more likely (up to 79% of ethnic groups) to have experienced discrimination.
- Also confirmed is that a significant proportion (33%) of our respondents have found their place of work to not be "inclusive".
- Strong support was given for suggestions presented in the survey about how best to make our organization more EDI-conscious.
- There was a sizeable proportion of respondents (5%) who reacted negatively to the survey, to the lines of questioning and even to the need for a survey. It is the view of some that "we do not have a problem." Such responses are treated respectfully here, but the direction of travel will support the clear majority view, which suggests that the Society should adjust its modus operandi in as many areas of activity as possible. (Such comments, reproduced in Appendix 3 under the heading "Rejection", are not condoned by the Society or its EDI committee. We do hope to use these comments to help our development of an EDI approach.)
- Don't ask people from marginalized groups to be the bearers of a disproportionate load in terms of attempting to achieve diversity in committees.
- Ensure that changes, e.g., in terms of funding, awards, publications, etc., do not remove emphasis from scientific endeavours, i.e., that those from marginalized groups will not value an award if they feel it is being given because they are from a marginalized group rather than on the basis of their abilities.

### **Actions**

- We will appoint a Council-level EDI officer; SIGs will each also appoint an EDI officer.
- As we move into the future, we will think about how the Society can influence EDI matters in a broader context, and not just in simple Society terms (e.g., who joins our subject and from where, and what will their experiences be in 2030 in comparison to 2020?).

- We will review activity in terms of meetings, publications, awards, grants, and lectures to ensure that all of our colleagues have the sense that they are welcome in our organization.
- We will measure our performance in terms of ensuring equity, diversity, and inclusivity across all of what we do.
- We will attempt to influence those around us. Can we provide a model that our members can bring to their places of work? To their research groups? To their classrooms? Our aim should be to lead by example (rather than acting as a watchdog with punitive powers).
- We will examine options for influencing those who have not yet considered our subject as a possible career. Some would say that the demographic breakdown in our science should reflect that in society as a whole. At present, it does not. There is an argument that cultural norms exist, which means that people from certain demographics choose not to enter science as a career. However, there are groups of people that do not appear in many categories, geoscience among them. Our aim should be to achieve a level of exposure of our science, such that anybody who would like to consider geoscience as an area of interest or as a career should feel that they are welcome to try it and feel that they have an equal chance of success.

The end of the survey (analysis of the data, publication, etc.) should merely represent the beginning of a life-long process for the Society. We received much encouragement from respondents for the actions we proposed. We also received advice not to be "woke", and to avoid the trap of ticking cultural EDI boxes, but without actually seeking "real" change.

In all of the above, there is no shortcut to success. Individuals will still rely on merit to succeed. However, it is the Society's job to provide an equal opportunity for all. Merit will be the deciding factor, but support/advocacy/mentorship will be provided equitably to those who want it to help their chances of succeeding with awards/bursaries/publishing success.

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