



Mineralogical Society of the UK and Ireland

www.minersoc.org

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY: ALL CHANGE

During the recent Covid pandemic, the Society began to re-evaluate its position in relation to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusivity (EDI). This was largely precipitated by the challenges that were revealed as our way of working, studying, and networking changed dramatically. Whilst at the outset, we believed our organization performed well in terms of our openness to all comers, membership, meetings/conferences, awards, and the rest, it was only when we sat around a virtual table for an open discussion that it became clear a review was necessary. We opened the door wide to that discussion and there has followed a three-year period of review, seeking opinion from our past and present members and our would-be members, and other learned societies. Reflecting on the various input received, we have made substantial changes, which we believe moves the Society forward significantly.

Firstly, the definition. Key is the use of the term 'equality'. Many of us use this word interchangeably with 'equity', but actually the latter describes more accurately what it is that we are trying to achieve. Equality means that everyone is given the same opportunity/resources and equity means that everyone is given the opportunity/resources they need to succeed. As such, running a meeting in London where there is a £0 fee for registration feels like equality. A £0 meeting that is also available online so anyone can join and are encouraged to do so, is more like equity.

The Society decided to first consult its membership and the wider community. Five hundred and twenty scientists at various stages of their careers responded to our long list of survey questions. A Society EDI Committee was formed and this group was charged with devising an action plan for how to respond to the points raised in our survey responses. The committee is chaired by Laura Kelly, the vice Chair is Ana Santos, and the current members are Kath Rothwell, Anna Bidgood, Binoy Sarkar, Queenie Chan, Savannah Worne, Oliver Lord, Katie Preece, Sally Gibson, and Kevin Murphy. Membership has changed as we went along, but we have sought input from all of our Special Interest Group committees and as much diversity as possible so that the group could be representative of the wider mineralogical community. The results (along with the questions and the resulting data) for our survey are available at <https://www.minersoc.org/edi.html>.

The initial task was to establish our terms of reference. We resolved to look at our main areas of activity within the Society and to map our EDI activity to those, identifying four key areas of development: (1) meetings/events; (2) membership; (3) awards; and (4) publications. And how did we identify those people to whom we seek to offer improved opportunity? We finally came upon the term 'people with protected characteristics'; you can find a definition of it here at the website of the Equality and Human Rights Commission (<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/equality/equality-act-2010/protected-characteristics>).

Whilst the EDI Committee continues discussions with our publishing stakeholders, i.e. our publishing partner (Cambridge University Press), the editors and authors of our three journals (*Mineralogical Magazine*, *Clay Minerals*, and *Geo-Bio Interfaces*), as well as Council, to advance our development in this area, our progress in the remaining key areas has been as follows:

1. Meetings/Events. We have developed an EDI policy in relation to our meetings. This takes the form of a set of guidelines for all those within our organization who undertake the planning and running of a meeting or event. There is comprehensive advice in the document, but key amongst them are as follows:

- a. Make sure the organizing team is as diverse as it can be, welcoming of those who are interested in helping and seek others who might not ask to be involved but would be pleased with an opportunity to contribute.
- b. Ensure that the initial information comes complete with a statement about the venue, accessibility, hybrid status, etc. and made available through the widest possible range of means, including social media, mailing lists, as well as 'in-house' methods of corresponding with members.
- c. Ensure that the speakers and other presenters are as diverse as possible, including those who have 'protected characteristics'.
- d. Allow limited alcohol at social events only and avoid centering events around the serving of alcohol.
- e. Ensure that the food provisions, if any, cater for dietary restrictions (collect this information at registration).
- f. Presentations should be 'accessible', i.e. in a suitable font and in colours that 'work' for people with colour-vision deficiency. Tailor the scheduling to accommodate those who might need to arrive late/leave early, especially if they have caring responsibilities, for example.
- g. Make sure that the means of providing feedback is available to all.
- h. Have a clear and obvious way for people to report on incidences of discrimination, harassment, etc., and be clear about who will deal with issues and what they will do in terms of taking action/reporting to the affected person.

Read the full guidelines here: <https://www.minersoc.org/meetings-and-edi.html>.

Read our guidelines for running hybrid meetings here: <https://www.minersoc.org/hybrid-meetings-guidelines.html>.

2. Awards. We have rebuilt our awards scheme. The changes we have made include:

- a. A broader pool of candidates has now become eligible and we aim to encourage applications/nominations among a much wider community of mineral scientists. This will be achieved by considering a broader range of criteria. Traditionally, we focused only on 'evidence of excellence in the form of published work'. We now include: Service to industry, Outreach/promotion of science, Leadership/Service, Teaching Excellence, and EDI activities, in addition to publications. We continue to accept nominations for non-members and by non-members. Members of the Awards Committee will be asked to assess candidates in on each of the criteria listed above.
- b. We now accept self-nominations.
- c. We have extended the membership of our Awards Committee.

Read about how our awards scheme will work going forward here: <https://www.minersoc.org/awards.html>.

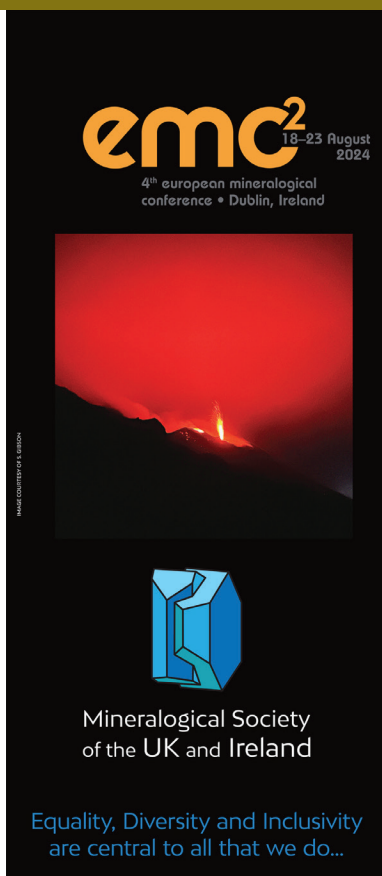
3. Membership. Membership traditionally focused around personal subscriptions to one or more Society journals. Because our journals are all now online only, and many individuals have access to them through their universities, this is no longer the attraction to membership that it once was. We offer personal subscriptions to *Elements* magazine but this is also available through other learned Societies in our area and is not a unique selling point. Our key attractions in terms of membership are our Special Interest Groups (x8), awards, bursaries, meetings, and the sense of belonging and ability to network with others in our community. We are in the process of building a scheme for enhancing skills and education that will commence in September 2024 and operate on

a monthly basis. This should also be attractive to potential members.

To encourage ongoing student participation, we are now extending our offer from 150 free memberships for one year, to 300 memberships for three years. This is a huge signal of intent by the Society as we approach our 150th birthday (2026). This offer is open to those students interested in mineral sciences (in the broadest sense) and **not** limited to residents of the UK/Ireland.


Read about our new membership offerings here: <https://www.minersoc.org/membership.html>.

Laura Kelly
(Chair, EDI Committee)
Kevin Murphy
(Executive Director)
Sally Gibson
(Min Soc President)



emc² 18–23 August 2024
4th european mineralogical conference • Dublin, Ireland

IMAGE COURTESY OF RASHLEIGH



Mineralogical Society
of the UK and Ireland

Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity
are central to all that we do...

ENVIRONMENTAL MINERALOGY GROUP & RSC RADIOCHEMISTRY GROUP JOINT RESEARCH IN PROGRESS MEETING

15–16 July 2024

University of Manchester, UK

ORGANISING COMMITTEE: Luke Townsend (EMG Chair), Thomas Neill (EMG Treasurer), Aislinn Boylan (EMG Industry Rep), Louise Natrajan (RSC Radiochemistry Chair), Liam Abrahamsen-Mills (RSC Radiochemistry Committee Member)

SUPPORT: Nuclear Waste Services and Dalton Nuclear Institute

SPONSORSHIP: National Nuclear Laboratory

Report

The EMG-RSC Radiochemistry Joint Research in Progress (RiP) Meeting aimed to provide a platform for researchers at all stages of their career to have an open and friendly platform to present their work regardless of its stage of completion. To this end, the meeting was a great success, bringing together researchers from a wide variety of UK institutions and career stages for a valuable two half-day meeting where themes that were covered included (but were not limited to) radioactive and non-radioactive contaminated land, geological disposal of radioactive waste, and mining. The keynote talk was delivered by Prof Claire Corkhill (University of Bristol) whose engaging and interesting work intersected the two themes of environmental mineralogy and radiochemistry expertly well, drawing on how naturally occurring minerals can help to inform disposal of radioactive waste.

As the meeting was held jointly with the RSC Radiochemistry group, there was the opportunity for EMG members to explore new areas of science that they may not usually be exposed to, including advanced



A quick group photo before heading off to the meal at the close of day one (some attendees had unfortunately already left for the day).

spectroscopic analytical techniques and modelling. This was also true for members of the RSC Radiochemistry group who were attending, and as such, good, insightful discussions were had between all attendees. These positive interactions were not just limited to the presentation sessions, as the optional meal was well attended, and this provided an invaluable opportunity for researchers to network with their peers in a more relaxed setting.

Due to some last-minute changes of schedules, some attendees had to join the meeting online, including the opening presentation of the conference. However, thanks to the hard work of the University of Manchester volunteers, the setup worked seamlessly. The full report is available at www.minersoc.org/emg-rsc-2024-report.html.

MINERALS FOR MORE PEOPLE: THE RASHLEIGH MINERAL GALLERY

The UK's Royal Cornwall Museum's Mineral Gallery (and the Rashleigh collection, which is a significant part of it) has been revamped so that 'knowledge and understanding of Cornish mining and minerals can be shared with more people'.

If you would like to see some photographs and a review of the new display, please visit Roy Starkey's post at <https://www.mindat.org/article.php/4938/The+Royal+Cornwall+Museum+-+mineral+gallery+re-opening+11+July+2024>.



IMAGE COURTESY OF ROY STARKEY.