



The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society  
[www.tms.org](http://www.tms.org)

**December 18, 2020**

**TMS Position Statement on Executive Order 13950:  
“Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping”**

President Trump’s Executive Order on Combating Race and Sex Stereotyping effectively bars federal agencies and their contractors and subcontractors from conducting diversity and inclusion training that promotes “divisive concepts.” Subsequent to the Order, the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs elaborated on the order’s intention and provided guidance as to how it is to be administered.

The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society objects to the substance of this Executive Order and the underlying premises explicitly and subjectively asserted within it. TMS is deeply concerned that this order will do immeasurable harm to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts within the science, technology, engineering, and mathematical communities. These fields are the engines of job creation, economic growth, national defense, and quality of life in the United States and, by extension, a stable global community. Just as our technological inspiration and reach is infinitely greater by leveraging the entire Periodic Table of Elements, so too is our ability to innovate by convening professionals and students with racial, gender, and cultural diversity. Inclusivity is not a divisive concept.

The Executive Order threatens to undo decades of real progress toward achieving greater racial and gender equity in the United States. The damage to the present and future of the nation’s science and engineering enterprise is immeasurable as the order runs counter to historic and current efforts by federal agencies, contractors, and grantees to foster a more inclusive and equitable work environment. The order also stirs disquieting echoes of Orwellian “thought police” and McCarthyistic “red-baiting” with the indisputable objective of repressing freedom of thought and speech—right down to forbidding the use of specific terminology and the establishment of an informer’s hotline to report perceived offenses and offenders.

The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society finds the Executive Order an unrelenting affront to our core values. We must do all that we can to bring more voices into discussions and problem solving, not fewer. Insidiously, the Executive Order creates paralysis and uncertainty among well-meaning people within well-meaning institutions as they consider the order and deliberate on the legal and ethical implications to their organizations.

The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society has undertaken such discussions, and we are resolved that

1. **We recommit to advancing racial and gender inclusivity** as exemplified by Goal One of the TMS Aspires Strategic Plan: “TMS aspires to be a highly inclusive society where all materials students and professionals feel welcome and diversity is celebrated.”
2. **We call for the immediate repeal** of this unjust, overreaching, and confusing order.
3. **We will not accept any federal dollars** that will require The Minerals, Metals & Materials Society to comply with the order or similar directives—even though this will exacerbate the financial distress of the Society as the devastating impact of COVID-19 threatens the sustainability of our business enterprise.
4. **We will conduct diversity, equity, and inclusivity training** in a manner consistent with accepted scholarship, unwavering integrity, ethical principles, and best practices.
5. **We will seek greater collaboration** with other science, technology, engineering, and mathematics professional societies to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion in our field and society in general.

As 2020 has demonstrated time and time again, our society needs more open and candid reflection on race, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation and equality; not less. The examination must be conducted with openness, scholarship, and goodwill—not within a fearful miasma of intimidation, retribution, and censorship.

TMS has and will continue to stand for truth, mindfulness, and scholarship, and it looks to our elected leaders to do the same.