

17 June 2020

An open letter on racism and inclusion, June 2020

As an industry association, we have a great culture of respect for each other. Several of our Federation members helped to establish and support [IP Inclusive](#) in its early days and the Federation [is a member of its Management board](#). The IP Federation is also currently working on plans to promote social mobility in the profession (and hopefully we can say more on this soon) and our collective response to Covid-19 has shone a light on the care we have for one another, as described in our article [IP owners step up to the plate](#).

Never has this culture been more important.

The unlawful death of George Floyd at the hands of US law enforcement officers on 25 May 2020 shines an uncomfortable, but important light on similar events happening to others there, as well as here in the UK and even since, with the death of Rayshard Brooks. These events have sparked global outrage, with protesters taking to the streets across both sides of the Atlantic and elsewhere. This comes at a moment of incredible global pressure and uncertainty caused by a global pandemic, which has been shown to disproportionately claim the lives of ethnic minorities¹. The root causes, whilst complex, are undeniably linked to social and economic disadvantage.

As the President of an organisation that nurtures and promotes diversity and inclusion, I want to say this: no one should be discriminated against because of the colour of their skin. It is counter to my values and the Federation's values, and there is absolutely no place for it within any professional organisation, or elsewhere. It should not happen, but let's be honest, it does. It is going to happen today, tomorrow and the day after. Things will only change when we start having honest conversations, when we call it out when we see it, and when we stand up and support each other.



Talking openly about race and equality helps us advance as a society, it gives us the opportunity to learn from each other's experiences and to think about our own

unconscious biases and there are many online resources and tools² that can help with this. If you have children then I also encourage you to talk to them about what is going on right now, do not let the moment pass. I am proud that my 17-year-old daughter is leading me to read, educate and discover, last Christmas buying me a seminal book³ as a gift and most recently, asking me to go with her on the Cambridge BLM protest⁴. A request which was not so easy to instantly fulfil, given the backdrop of Covid. However, I felt that there are some issues simply so great, that they surmount personal risk.



Because discrimination of any kind has no place in our culture.

Suzanne M Oliver

Suzanne Oliver
President, IP Federation

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-understanding-the-impact-on-bame-communities>

² Harvard IAT tests <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>

³ Why I'm no longer talking to white people about race, Reni Eddo-Lodge

⁴ <https://www.cambridge-news.co.uk/news/cambridge-news/gallery/pictures-show-huge-crowds-cambridge-18375770>



IP Federation members 2020

The IP Federation represents the views of UK industry in both IPR policy and practice matters within the EU, the UK and internationally. Its membership comprises the innovative and influential companies listed below. The CBI, although not a member, is represented on the Federation Council, and the Council is supported by a number of leading law firms which attend its meetings as observers. It is listed on the joint Transparency Register of the European Parliament and the Commission with identity No. 83549331760-12.

AGCO Ltd
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Babcock International Ltd
BAE Systems plc
BP p.l.c.
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BTG plc
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Caterpillar U.K. Ltd
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GE Healthcare
GKN Automotive Limited
GlaxoSmithKline plc
Hitachi Europe Ltd
HP Inc UK Limited
IBM UK Ltd
Infineum UK Ltd
Johnson Matthey PLC
Juul Labs UK Holdco Ltd
Merck Sharp & Dohme Ltd
Microsoft Limited
Nokia Technologies (UK) Limited
NEC Europe
Ocado Group plc
Pfizer Ltd
Philips Electronics UK Ltd
Pilkington Group Ltd
Procter & Gamble Ltd
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