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In February the IRSE's governing Council approved a policy on "Diversity, Equality and Inclusion". We believe that equal opportunities should govern every aspect of our work, and that all staff, applicants for jobs, volunteers, and members should be treated equitably and fairly. Setting goals and putting in place activities to treat people fairly, and actively include them, is both the right thing to do and will ultimately contribute to the creation of a better society.

For companies and for industry, the principles of embracing diversity, treating people equally, and including them, also have an important business dimension. Companies with more diverse workforces are more profitable, according to a "Women Matter" study by McKinsey. A diverse workforce within a company makes it stronger in all areas, including its resilience and its ability to innovate. A company's customers are usually very diverse, so having a workforce that is drawn from a similarly varied pool means that the company is more likely to understand their customers' needs.

In the field of engineering, the gender disparity is the most obvious aspect of a lack of diversity that needs attention. Other professions, notably medicine and law, are already changing visibly. We need to change too, in order to ensure there are no unintentional barriers to attracting people with the requisite skills and experience, whatever their background.

Many countries have laws that prohibit discrimination and unfair treatment of people on the grounds of age; disability; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sexual orientation.

The IRSE may be a relatively small organisation, but we have members worldwide, and we should not under-estimate our ability to influence others. So let us commit ourselves, both as an organisation and as individuals, to making the Institution and the industry in which we work one where everybody feels welcomed and valued.

Francis How, Chief Executive



Front Cover: One of this issue's major articles looks at signalling in Japan through the eyes of the winner of the Thorowgood scholarship, Tom Corker. Our front cover shows the supervision of high speed train departures at Shin-Osaka station, Japan. *Photo Francis How.*

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