

8 May 2025

Dear Dr Todd and signatories

Thank you for your email and the open letter from the community attached in response to the Supreme Court ruling of 16 April and the subsequent interim guidance from the EHRC.

As the Society's President, I recognise the uncertainty and concern that these events have caused for many in the geographical community and beyond.

... I want to reassure you, and the rest of the geographical community, that everyone is welcome at the Society – and this absolutely includes all trans and gender diverse people. As an organisation we remain firmly committed to the values of equity, diversity and inclusion, upholding trans rights, and providing safe and supportive environments that allow everyone to thrive.

The Society is not a political or campaigning organisation, and we can only respond to issues directly related to our charitable objective of advancing geographical science. However, geographical research has an important role to play in informing how the EHRC should update their guidance. In order for your scholarly expertise and relevant lived experience, as well as that of others in the geographical community, to most effectively feed into the forthcoming process, I suggest that the Research Groups submit a response to the consultation.

We will be guided by your suggestions on how best to facilitate this – it may be that several Research Groups come together to write a single response, individual Groups submit their own, or a mix of both approaches. No matter how individual Research Groups wish to organise on this, we can support them by drawing on the recently allocated funding for interventions to: support a rapid review of the geographical evidence base; offer support from Society staff or select Trustees in writing effective submissions; or provide a space (physical and/or virtual) to enable discussion.

The Society's Director of Research, Education and Professional, Dr Catherine Souch, will be in touch with Research Group Chairs directly about this in the coming days.

In addition, Catherine will be in touch with you and the Research Groups about how else the Society can support the geographical community including, for example:

- Working with the Council of Heads of Departments to enable representatives to speak at their next meeting on 6 June, to ensure

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all university departments are attentive to the concerns of trans and gender diverse staff and students.

- Enabling a listening space(s) to hear from the community about specific concerns and actions (online and later at the annual conference in Birmingham).
- Reviewing the annual conference code of conduct and practices of delivering Society events.

...

The Society offers other ways for geographers to raise awareness of the challenges that trans and gender diverse people face, and I would encourage you and your colleagues to make the most of the opportunities to, for example, organise sessions at conference to support each other and share insight, write a piece for one of the Society's journals or the *Geography Directions* research blog, or work with us to develop teaching and learning resources to support trans and gender diverse students in geography.

We are listening and open to other suggestions too – we want to work with you to navigate this situation together.

The Society draws its strength and impact from its community, and I therefore reiterate our ongoing and fundamental commitment to being inclusive and welcoming to all.

With your permission, the Society will publish your open letter, and this response on its website alongside our other public statements.

Yours sincerely



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