



Merit, Excellence & Intelligence (MEI) Program Executive Summary

At the S.A.P.I.E.N.T. Being, we love the diversity and inclusion components in the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) trilogy—and strongly support them. However, the equity part, as in equitable outcomes, is the opposite of equality, as in equality of opportunities—and its underlying principles are racist—which the S.A.P.I.E.N.T. Being is vehemently opposed to.

Unfortunately, most Americans are not aware of the fundamental difference, which is in fact reverse racism, and if they did, they would strongly oppose it. A more appropriate and alternate approach to DEI would be merit based as Elon Musk puts it, “The point was to end discrimination, not replace it with different discrimination.” On the other hand, merit based policies work hand in hand with equality of opportunity, which the United States exemplifies and excels at.

With rapidity and stealth, the DEI ideology has come to replace the classical liberal values of Merit, Excellence, and Intelligence (MEI). At the S.A.P.I.E.N.T. Being, America’s leading anti-wokeness organization and non-profit think tank, the time for a national debate over the conflicting values of DEI and MEI is long overdue in the academy, professional organizations, media, government and large technology companies.

DEI is a significant cultural and ideological revolution, one that has been accomplished with almost no debate or operationalization of terminology. DEI bureaucracies have mushroomed and many operate behind the scenes with ambiguous DEI definitions, goals and policies. The unexamined acceptance of DEI, however defined, is surprising in a free society where critics are encouraged to challenge and debate significant social changes.

Furthermore, the left-wing media, woke Marxist academia, and the progressive wing of the Democratic Party avoid debating the criticisms of DEI and the merits of MEI. Just as Alabama segregationist governor George Wallace never debated Martin Luther King, DEI backers with institutional power show no enthusiasm for defending their ideas in real debates. Without vigorous open and civil debate, DEI bureaucracies will continue to impose doctrinal training programs, litmus tests, censorship and discrimination. Unless this is challenged, we risk entering a new era of institutionalized McCarthyism.

DEI is Derivative of Neo-Marxist Identitarian Ideologies

In its most radical forms, DEI is derivative of neo-Marxist identitarian ideologies that attribute virtually all average group differences—from arrest rates to medical school admissions—to systemic discrimination. However, average group differences in outcomes can reflect a variety of factors (see Thomas Sowell’s *Social Justice Fallacies*).

Overwhelmingly, these differences have nothing to do with hypothetical external factors such as systemic racism, white privilege, and unconscious bias—and instead, have most everything to do with three critical factors based on personal choices and responsibilities: 1) the rate of fatherless children, 2) the lack of educational attainment, and 3) sky high crime rates. Together, these three factors represent the common denominator to group differences, and will continue to do so, decade after decade, until those groups affected by these factors acknowledge the truth that the changes required to rectify these differences, must come from within, after first accepting them themselves and then dealing with them on a personal basis.

For example, because black men are disproportionately incarcerated, racism reigns eternal. This belief assumes that blacks do not commit crimes any more frequently than whites. But if black men make up almost 50 percent of the prison population, they committed roughly 42 percent of violent crimes in the 1990s, and many studies have shown that, when severity of crime and past record are taken into account, there is no bias against blacks in the criminal justice system. Reference *Crime Rate Madness* for more alarming statistics.

To further understand the implications of this example and see how the equity aspect of DEI programs would address this disparate impact imbalance, professional organizations such as the American Psychological Association, the American Bar Association, and even the more moderate American Political Science Association are adopting DEI initiatives, embracing empirically contested concepts such as implicit bias and endorsing legally questionable hiring and admissions policies that utilize de facto racial quotas—to the detriment of unfavored demographics (i.e., mostly whites, Asians, and Jews whose outcomes are not heavily influenced by the three mentioned root causes of disparities)—instead of focusing on the three root causes of disparities noted above that created the imbalance to begin with.

In the academy, DEI and other identitarian orthodoxies are often mandated to be taught in student orientations and required courses, and enforced by campus DEI bureaucrats who now outnumber history faculty. By categorizing virtually any criticism as “prejudiced,” DEI bureaucracies can chill free speech and have empowered some college presidents to slander their critics as bigots and then terminate them. Program renewals for academic departments, and thus continued employment for professors and graduate students, are increasingly tied to embracing DEI rhetoric and goals.

Being the world’s number one destination for immigrants, and the world’s most successful multi-racial society, America is founded on the principle of equal opportunity and not the neo-Marxist and reverse racism aspect of enforcing equality of outcomes (i.e., equity), the redistribution of wealth, power and resources based on the demographic factors of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and political ideology.

Moving from DEI to MEI: An Alternative Approach for Enhancing Workforce Performance

Since reaching a high-water mark a few years ago, “diversity, equity, and inclusion” (DEI) initiatives are being rolled back across America. Critics like Elon Musk and investor Bill Ackman have called DEI efforts inherently unfair, illegal, and discriminatory. Companies like Tesla, Google, and Meta, and many others, have either eliminated or drastically scaled back their DEI programs.

The legal landscape is changing, too. Last year, the U.S. Supreme Court barred colleges and universities from using race as a factor in admissions. In a concurring opinion, Justice Gorsuch wrote that the same

result should apply to private employers, and that race should not be a factor in hiring decisions. Meanwhile Florida and Texas have banned DEI in their colleges and universities.

The reason for the backlash is simple: DEI doesn't work. In fact, it runs against the mandate to hire regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, class, or sexual orientation. Moreover, studies show that DEI has negative consequences, including lower quality, lower productivity, and less innovation. It can also lead to lower product safety, as has happened at Boeing.

Instead of continuing a failing policy, there is a better way. It's called "Merit, Excellence, and Intelligence" (MEI). According to Scale AI Chief Executive Alexandr Wang, MEI calls for hiring the best candidates for open roles, regardless of background. Just as supporting DEI doesn't make a person tolerant of differences, supporting MEI doesn't make a person racist, sexist, or intolerant of differences.

As Wang says, "A hiring process based on merit will naturally yield a variety of backgrounds, perspectives, and ideas." He cautions, "We will not pick winners and losers based on someone being the 'right' or 'wrong' gender, race, and so on." As Elon Musk puts it, "The point was to end discrimination, not replace it with different discrimination." Even proponents of DEI concede that a large proportion of diversity interventions don't generate measurable positive results. Moreover, DEI "has been found to backfire on marginalized groups' feelings of belonging and weaken support for diversity programs when organizational performance drops," according to the *Harvard Business Review*.

In the MEI approach, hiring decisions are based strictly on merit. Diversity, whether of race, gender, or worldview, emerges naturally as the best candidates rise to the top. In other words, diversity isn't a goal to be chased by picking winners and losers in advance. It is simply the result of picking the best people for each role.