

## Statement    About    Press

---

### Select media coverage

Los Angeles Times: [“Noam Chomsky, Junot Diaz and nearly 400 MIT faculty oppose Trump picks in open letter”](#)

The Washington Post: [“Scientists are really, really worried about Donald Trump”](#)

Boston Magazine: [“MIT Profs Oppose Trump Appointments, Stand Up for Science in Letter”](#)

Inside Higher Ed: [“Values for the Trump Era”](#)

The Tech: [“Over 300 faculty sign statement opposing Trump’s cabinet picks”](#)

Breitbart: [“MIT Prof Who Called Americans ‘Stupid’ Protests Bannon’s Harvard Visit”](#)

---

### Press Release

*For Immediate Release*

Tuesday, November 29, 2016

Contact: Roger Levy, [rplevy@mit.edu](mailto:rplevy@mit.edu), Nancy Kanwisher, [ngk@mit.edu](mailto:ngk@mit.edu)

Hundreds of MIT Faculty Sign Statement Upholding the Value of Science and Diversity

CAMBRIDGE, Massachusetts, November 29, 2016 — Over 300 MIT faculty and counting have taken a public stand, issuing a commitment to uphold and defend fundamental principles of inclusivity and scientific inquiry in the wake of a presidential campaign and transition wrought with rhetoric threatening these principles. The signatories include professors from every academic department at MIT, nine department and program heads, four Nobel Prize recipients, and other distinguished members of the scientific community. Notable signatories to date include Co-Chair of the Nobel Prize-winning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Susan Solomon, World Wide Web inventor Tim Berners-Lee, Institute Professor Emeritus Noam Chomsky, Director of the MIT Media Lab Joi Ito, Pulitzer Prize winner Junot Díaz, and Affordable Care Act architect Jonathan Gruber.

The statement reads:

*A Message from MIT Faculty Reaffirming our Shared Values*

The President-elect has appointed individuals to positions of power who have endorsed racism, misogyny and religious bigotry, and denied the widespread scientific consensus on climate change. Regardless of our political views, these endorsements violate principles at the core of MIT's [mission](#). At this time, it is important to reaffirm the values we hold in common.

We, the undersigned faculty at MIT, thus affirm the following principles:

- We unconditionally reject every form of bigotry, discrimination, hateful rhetoric, and hateful action, whether directed towards one's race, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, disability, citizenship, political views, socioeconomic status, veteran status, or immigration status.
- We endorse MIT's values of open, respectful discourse and exchange of ideas from the widest variety of intellectual, religious, class, cultural, and political perspectives.
- We uphold the principles of the scientific method, of fact- and reason-based objective inquiry. Science is not a special interest; it is not optional. Science is a foundational ingredient in how we as a society analyze, understand, and solve the most difficult challenges that we face.

For any member of our community who may feel fear or oppression, our doors are open and we are ready to help. We pledge to work with all members of the community – students, faculty, staff, postdoctoral researchers, and administrators – to defend these principles today and in the times ahead.

*MIT faculty signers share their thoughts about the statement:*

Director of the MIT Media Lab Joi Ito:

“Academic institutions have historically been havens to protect diversity of opinions and the freedom to express those opinions when the political climate has impinged on

this freedom. It appears that we are entering a period where the political climate requires us to assert our leadership to protect and foster diversity and scientific inquiry itself.”

Professor of Physics Max Tegmark, author of *Our Mathematical Universe*, and founder of The Future of Life Institute:

“If we share the values of our community, it’s important not merely to be thankful for them, but also to defend them.”

Professor of Economics Jonathan Gruber:

“Public policy discussions have moved away from facts to conjecture and opinion. The only way to reverse this dangerous trend is to reaffirm the scientific method and its sound application to the important policy issues of the day.”

Professor of Brain and Cognitive Sciences Nancy Kanwisher:

“It is important to draw the line between the very wide range of legitimate political debate that we encourage at MIT, and the deliberate denial of scientific fact. Many of those appointed by the new administration are not conducting business as usual, but sharply departing from respectful public discourse and from scientific consensus.”

Associate Professor of Media Arts and Sciences Ed Boyden, Co-Director of the MIT Center for Neurobiological Engineering, Professor of Biological Engineering and Brain and Cognitive Sciences, and recent recipient of the Breakthrough Prize in Life Sciences:

“In uncertain times, it’s important to take a stand. At MIT, we stand against bigotry and hateful action, and for science and facts. I’m excited to see hundreds of my fellow faculty take this stand together.”

This effort was initiated by a small group of MIT faculty, graduate students, and postdoctoral researchers (including Nancy Kanwisher, Roger Levy, Sarah Schwettmann, and Rosa Lafer-Sousa), who joined together to conceive a public message to the campus community and the world at large. In a grassroots effort, they invited members of the MIT

community to participate in the national dialogue through this statement affirming values central to MIT's [mission](#) of commitment "to generating, disseminating, and preserving knowledge, and to working with others to bring this knowledge to bear on the world's great challenges."

For the complete list of signatories and more information, visit [www.mitvalues.org](http://www.mitvalues.org).

[Share](#)[Tweet](#)