



May 3, 2021

Dear IEED Team Members and UNC Innovation Community:

On April 20, 2021, a jury in Minneapolis delivered a guilty verdict in the murder of Mr. George Floyd. It is difficult to imagine the pain endured by the Floyd family during and after the trial. As our thoughts go out to his family, we set our hearts, minds and hands toward finding solutions to the problems that affected Mr. Floyd and his family directly and which afflict our society at large: racial disparities, bias, discrimination, police brutality, and injustice in all its forms.

These complex issues require our innovative thinking and action, which are only made possible when we engage diverse perspectives, experiences and voices. We are a human family and must work in unison to find answers. While there is much work to do, we are heartened as we reflect on the multi-ethnic support displayed in protest of the reprehensible events surrounding Mr. Floyd's murder. In both voice and action, we see the role that citizens can play to help create a society that is fair and just.

On the day when police arrested and murdered Mr. Floyd, ordinary citizens made exceptional contributions: capturing the acts on video, speaking out publicly and directly with public officials, and marching in protest of policies and practices that endanger people of color and the most vulnerable among us. Yes, ordinary people can do incredible things.

All of us can help in many ways to minimize racial, ethnic and gender-based injustices. To innovate for the public good, we must not only think about what is possible. We must also speak brave words and do important work. When we envision the future society that we all want for our children and families, it is imperative that we find ways to engage as responsible citizens to help create a more inclusive world. Together, we innovate for all.

Sincerely,

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee
UNC Office of Innovation, Entrepreneurship and Economic Development