

NASA Ordered to Remove Anything About 'Women in Leadership' From Its Websites: Report

"This is a drop everything and reprioritize your day request."

By Passant Rabie

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NASA astronaut Suni Williams outside the ISS during a spacewalk that set a new record for women astronauts on January 16, 2025. Credit: NASA

NASA is working to comply with President Donald Trump's crusade targeting diversity and inclusion at federal agencies, reportedly scrapping key terms from its websites related to accessibility, indigenous people, women, and other topics deemed "wasteful" by the current administration. In a memo sent out on January 22, NASA employees were ordered to "scrub" mentions certain terms from the agency's websites by end of day, according to 404 Media. "This is a drop everything and reprioritize your day request," the memo read. "Note that the list below is the list that exists this morning, but it may grow as the day goes on."

The list includes mentions of diversity, equity, inclusion programs (DEIA), underrepresented groups/people, environmental justice, and "anything specifically targeting women (women in leadership, etc.)," per the memo obtained by 404 Media. Gizmodo reached out to NASA to confirm the information but we did not hear back by time of publication.

Shortly after President Donald Trump announced his executive order related to shutting down DEIA offices in the federal government, NASA quickly put an end to its diversity programs and canceled any related contracts. "These programs divided Americans by race, wasted taxpayer dollars, and resulted in shameful discrimination," NASA's acting administrator Janet Petro wrote in a memo sent

out to agency employees on January 22.

Prior to Trump’s orders, NASA was named as one of the best employees in the U.S. for diversity in 2023. NASA’s workforce is composed of approximately 35% women and 30% minorities, according to a 2021 report by NASA’s Office of Inspector General. Still, the agency had more work to do to improve inclusion amongst its workforce. A 2024 report concluded that “despite support from Agency leaders and multiple initiatives to increase diversity, we found NASA has made little progress in increasing the representation of women and minorities in its civilian workforce or leadership ranks,” NASA’s Office of Inspector General wrote. “Specifically, over the past decade NASA’s overall workforce demographics have stayed roughly the same, with small increases (1 or 2 percent) for some groups.”

NASA’s websites are now undergoing a worrying change that aims to omit important milestones in the space agency’s history. For example, a 2023 article mentioning NASA’s 1978 class of astronauts that included the first female, Black, and Asian-American astronauts, was removed from the agency’s website by January 29, returning an error message instead, SpaceNews reported. Additionally, words like ‘inclusive’ were changed to ‘fair,’ while the word inclusion was omitted altogether on NASA’s pages, according to 404 Media.

In an effort to comply with Trump’s orders, NASA also paused the work of several astrophysics and planetary science committees as it works to figure out where those groups stand from its obsolete DEI programs.

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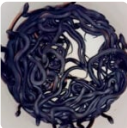
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