

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION [EDI] POLICY

December 2022

The Wheel EDI Policy Development

In early 2022, The Wheel board decided that the organisation would have a new board-approved policy on equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and that it would be adopted by the end of 2022. To further this it established The Wheel Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group [EDI WG] to provide considerations for the Governance & Nominations subgroup in relation to an EDI policy development. The EDI WG comprised of board, staff and members of The Wheel. In addition, as there was more interest that there were places on the WG, a consultative group [made up of staff and members] was formed to enable further discussion that was then fed back to the WG. The EDI WG produced its report in September 2022 and was considered by the Governance & Nominations subgroup. It was agreed that a draft EDI Policy should be based upon the principles and values expressed in the EDI WG Report and should be relevant for staff, board and members. This policy document reflects the EDI WG Report as agreed.

The Wheel Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Guiding Statement

Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion guiding statement is based on our vision of a thriving charity and community sector at the heart of a fair, just and inclusive Ireland, and on our values – Courageous, Inclusive, Accountable and Collaborative.

The Wheel ensures that its events, projects and external & internal processes conform with our values and the guiding statement and associated principles in our EDI policy. We take action to ensure equal participation by all people and communities in our work.

Principles

- We specifically commit to non-discrimination related to the nine grounds under the Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2018: gender, marital status, family status, age disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community. In addition, to this we include people who are in receipt of rent supplement, housing assistance, or social welfare payments
- We commit to striving for a work environment where everyone is valued and given the supports they require in their work to ensure equity, and all differences will be attended to respectfully
- We commit to representing and supporting our members in such ways that demonstrate our commitment to EDI
- We will use every opportunity to have a team of committed staff and board members to foster and encourage equality, diversity and inclusion
- We consider EDI across three domains of our organisation's work: board, staff and the services and programmes we deliver

Policy Implementation

- This is intended to be an 'Action Learning' policy where all aspects of it embody the learning-by-doing principle. The Wheel already demonstrates good practice in EDI in many places and spaces in its work. Through having a formal EDI Policy in place, practical ways to enhance current practice will continue to be considered and implemented – both as part of our regular organisational planning and reporting, as well as having been put in place specifically as a result of an EDI perspective.
- Any new EDI-actions will be written into the organisation's HR-Action Plan for each year, and that in turn will feed into and support the organisation's operations plan for that year.
- As new practices develop, they will be added as appropriate to the 'current practices' section in the appendix of this policy.
- All in the organisation can, and do, contribute to how EDI happens in our organisation. Specific intentional engagement with the board, staff and members is a part of our annual culture and HR management work-planning. In this way we ensure that EDI practices are and remain embedded in how we do our work.
- The communication of this policy is done at induction time for new staff and the policy placed on our internal staff intranet. It will be specifically and intentionally focused on at an all-staff meeting at least once per year.
- The Wheel's EDI Policy and action plan as well as learnings and our process will be shared with our members via a section on The Wheel website. This keeps our members updated and enables both The Wheel and our members to share experience and learning as a guide for each of our organisation's EDI policy development.
- This is a board-approved policy that is overseen by the Governance & Nominations subgroup. Responsibility for implementation is delegated to the CEO and through them, to relevant staff as determined by the CEO.
- An external service provider may be contracted to support the implementation of actions associated with this policy.

Ongoing Policy Development & Review

- The staff members of the EDI WG continue as an 'EDI internal working group' [WG] to inform and assist with implementing EDI actions.
- The Governance & Nominations subgroup will monitor and review this policy.
- The board will review the policy, as part of its organisation-wide policies review process via the matrix for reviewing all policies. The policy will be reviewed every three years.