



Youth Work Ireland

Youth Work Ireland Equality and Inclusion Policy Practice Guidelines 2021

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Mission Statement

Youth Work Ireland is committed to a work environment and culture which values equality, celebrates diversity and challenges discrimination in all forms, in our employment practices and service provisions.

Policy Statement

This policy provides a framework and practice guidelines for Youth Work Ireland National Office to ensure the values of equality and inclusion are explicit and embedded within all our work practices.

Through our work, we support the provision of services which empower young people to achieve their full potential. We recognise the strength and continuing contribution diversity makes and we are fully committed to embracing the diversity of the communities we work in.

Who is covered under the policy?

This policy applies to:

- Youth Work Ireland National Office staff
- Youth Work Ireland National Board Members, Board Sub-Group Members
- Volunteers
- Interns
- Young People participating in services run from National Office.

This policy should be read in conjunction with

- HR Policy
- Complaints Policy and Procedures
- Staff Handbook

Our Values and Commitment to Equality and Inclusion

Promoting equality and celebrating diversity is a core value of Youth Work Ireland, as explicitly stated in our Strategic Plan and mirrored in our work practices.

We are committed to the principles of equality and inclusion and challenge discrimination based on the nine grounds set out in equality legislation: *gender, family status, civil status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, ethnicity, and membership of the Traveller community*. This policy also extends to *young people involved in juvenile justice, out of education or employment, affected by homeless or substance abuse and those from geographically disadvantaged or rural communities*.

Glossary of Terms

Discrimination (Direct): Discrimination is defined as the treatment of a person in a less favourable way than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on any of the nine equality grounds. Discrimination can be direct, indirect, by association or imputation.

Discrimination (Indirect): Indirect discrimination happens when there is less favourable treatment in effect or by impact.

Diversity: The practice of valuing everyone as a unique individual and celebrating the differences they bring.

Equality: The state of being equal, especially in status, rights and opportunity. Equality ensures the fair and equal treatment of individuals or groups, ensuring they are treated equally and no less favourably in areas including those listed in the 9+ grounds.

Equality of Outcome: Equality of Outcomes recognised that some people are more disadvantaged than others, and so should be provided with opportunities so they can achieve the same or similar outcomes as others.

Equality of Opportunities: Equality of opportunities seeks to ensure that everyone has the same opportunities to compete or make gains.

Inclusion: Inclusion is the act and practice of embracing all people irrespective of race, gender, disability, or other attributes with a view to achieving equal access, opportunities and outcomes for all and to eliminate discrimination and intolerance.

Interculturalism: Interculturalism is the support for cross cultural dialogue and interaction that occur between people of different cultures, ethnicities or religious groups.

Employment Practices

Youth Work Ireland is committed to a policy of equality and inclusion in its employment practices based on the following principles and practices which underpinned by the **Employment Equality Act** which prohibit discrimination in employment, including recruitment, promotion, pay and other conditions of employment – based on nine grounds.

Principles and Practice Guidelines

- No staff member or applicant will be discriminated against or receive less favourable treatment than any other based on the 9+ grounds listed above.
- We work to promote a harmonious working environment for all based on mutual respect and dignity.
- We are committed to promoting equality of opportunity for all employees and prospective employees.
- Principles and practices of equality apply to all conditions of service of our employees including recruitment, placement, selection, promotion, career development, training, pensions, and special leave entitlements.
- Diversity will be represented, where possible, on interview panels. Interview panels will as far as possible, consist of three or more people
- The composition of our workforce should as far as possible, reflect that of the communities in which we are based, particularly in terms of age, gender, disability and ethnic origin.
- Youth Work Ireland employees must not, either directly or indirectly, discriminate unfairly against fellow employees.
- No Youth Work Ireland employee will be penalised or treated less favourably because of pursuing rights by way of taking action, supporting action or giving notice of intention to take or support action under equality legislation.
- Youth Work Ireland employees must not prevail upon management, trade unions, or colleagues to practice unfair discrimination or to act in a way, which is contrary to the spirit of this policy.
- Employees availing of family friendly and work life balance working arrangements should not be placed at a disadvantage due to this.
- We strive to fulfil our legal obligations under the existing equality legislation (as listed below).

Service Provision

Youth Work Ireland is committed to a policy of equality and inclusion in its service provision with and for young people, based on the following principles and practices which are underpinned by The **Equal Status Acts** which prohibit discrimination in access to and provision of services, accommodation and educational establishments – based on nine grounds.

Principles and Practice Guidelines

- Youth Work Ireland is committed to ensuring that no person within or accessing its services is treated less favourably than another based on the nine grounds +.
- Youth Work Ireland is committed to ensuring that all young people accessing its services are valued and treated with respect and dignity.
- Youth Work Ireland promotes and encourages the social inclusion of all young people.
- Youth Work Ireland addresses and encourage the active participation of people from different backgrounds in all our services and programmes.
- Youth Work Ireland recognises that equality is not always about treating people the same – sometimes it is about treating them in such a way that achieves equality of outcomes for all.
- Youth Work Ireland strives to pro-actively celebrate and value diversity within our organisation and the communities we work in.
- Youth Work Ireland recognise that equality is the basis for participation and seeks to ensure the active participation of young people in decision-making within the organisation.
- Youth Work Ireland advocate for and protect the rights of young people.
- We will endeavour to put in place measures to ensure a safe and welcoming environment that supports and empowers young people.

Monitoring and Implementation

Overall Responsibility and Monitoring of Policy

All Youth Work Ireland staff, board members, sub-group members, volunteers, interns and young people accessing services run from National Office are required to comply with this policy and are responsible for ensuring its practical application.

Youth Work Ireland shall actively seek feedback on the implementation and review of this policy from staff, young people learners and service users.

The implementation of the policy shall be reviewed on a regular basis by the Board of National Office and shall be updated on foot of any legislative changes, or where they feel necessary.

Implementation of Policy

Practice Indicator	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Our Equality and Inclusion Policy is known to staff and is implemented in our day-to-day work and service provision.		
Our Equality and Inclusion Policy aligns with our values and ethos – as outlined in our Strategic Plan.		
Our Equality and Inclusion policy is available on our website and included in all board and staff induction packs.		
Our organisation ensures that we seek to include young people from a range of minority and ethnic backgrounds in our work and services, and in particular in Youth Panels.		
Our organisation promotes social justice, inclusion and ensures that celebrating diversity is explicitly stated as an objective of our work and our strategic objectives?		
Our organisation is open and genuinely welcoming to people from all religions, ethnicities and beliefs, – and this is represented visually and explicitly in promotional materials.		
Our organisation’s staff and volunteers feel confident in addressing racist and discriminatory comments, language, and behaviour in all forms?		
Our organisation has procedures and processes for breaches of the policy, such as incidents of bullying, use of hate speech or hateful behaviours, discrimination, and prejudice?		

Legal Context

This policy is informed by the following domestic and internationally binding legislation:

[Employment Equality Acts 1998](#), and the [Equal Status Acts 2000](#) prohibit direct and indirect discrimination, sexual harassment, harassment and victimisation in relation to nine grounds: *gender, family status, civil status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, ethnicity and membership of the Traveller community*. This policy also extends to *young people involved in juvenile justice, out of education or employment, affected by homeless or substance abuse and those from geographically disadvantaged or rural communities*.

The **Employment Equality Acts** prohibit discrimination in employment, including recruitment, promotion, pay and other conditions of employment – based on the nine equality grounds.

The **Equal Status Acts** prohibit discrimination in access to and provision of services, accommodation and educational establishments – based on the nine equality grounds.

The [Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014](#) requires organisations funded from public bodies to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and treatment and protect the human rights of staff and service users.

[The Public Sector Duty](#) has been part of Irish law since 2014 and is set out in Section 42 of the IHREC Act. It places a statutory obligation on organisations in receipt of State funding to eliminate discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and protect the human rights of those to whom they provide services and staff when carrying out their daily work.

The [Irish Constitution](#) is the fundamental legal document that sets out how Ireland should be governed and the rights of Irish citizens. The equality and human rights provisions referred to as fundamental rights are set out in Articles 38 – 44.

[United National Convention on the Rights of the Child \(UNCRC\)](#) is a legally binding international agreement, ratified by Ireland in 1992, which sets out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities. It consists of 41 articles, each of which details a different type of right and four general principles which ensure that:

- All the rights guaranteed by the UNCRC be available to all children without discrimination.
- The best interests of the child must be a primary consideration in all actions concerning them.
- Every child has the right to live, survival and development.
- The child's view must be considered in all matters affecting them.

[European Convention on Human Rights \(ECHR\)](#) is an international human rights treaty which gives all adults, children and young people a set of rights including the Prohibition of Discrimination in the Enjoyment of Convention Rights (Art. 14). Cases in violation of the ECHR can be brought to the European Court of Human Rights and all states within the COE have a duty to comply with rulings.

[The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights](#) contains 54 Articles on the rights and freedoms under six titles: Dignity, Freedoms, Equality, Solidarity, Citizens' Rights, and Justice. The Charter became legally binding in the EU with the passing of the Treaty of Lisbon in 2009.