

Diversity & Inclusion Policy

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Contact Officer:	Claire Joyce
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Policy Links:	<p>CIFF Policy link found here for the following policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● CIFF Grievance Policy ● CIFF Disciplinary Policy ● CIFF Feedback & Complaints Policy ● CIFF Dignity & Respect in the Workplace Policy

Brief Policy Summary:

This policy sets out how Cork International Film Festival will achieve its aims to promote Diversity & Inclusion as an employer and supplier of services.

It outlines how Diversity & Inclusion will underpin all areas of the organisation's work and service provision, including the communities within which it operates.

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1. Purpose

1.1 Policy Statement

Cork International Film Festival (CIFF) is committed to supporting Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in all aspects of its activity, employment and operations. The Board of CIFF wishes to set out publicly their commitment to equity through our focus on Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility as a key responsibility and priority.

As a local festival with global focus, Cork International Film Festival has celebrated and promoted multiculturalism, Diversity, and Inclusion for 70 years. Cork International Film Festival's programme consistently reflects the breadth and diversity of society and the world's stories. It continually evolves with the community it serves.

We believe in championing film as a powerful platform to tell stories, raise awareness of issues, promote active discussion and debate, and deliver positive impact by engaging with both audiences and stakeholders.

We want to use our platform as a world class festival to showcase a diverse and wide range of lived experiences, voices and perspectives, and ensure that everyone we work with, support and welcome to the festival can enjoy the same opportunities. We think that our biggest impact is the opportunity of educating cinema-goers, stimulating discussion and shining a light on the issues and solutions of climate and social issues, by carefully curating our film programme and outreach activities.

We are committed to fostering an environment both internally and externally that promotes and respects EDI at work and to treating all of our employees, directors, volunteers, stakeholders, artists and the public equally, regardless of age, civil status, disability, family status, gender including gender identity, religious belief, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, religious belief, membership of the Traveller community and/or socio-economic background. The Festival is not complacent about its progress to date, and recognises that there is more work to be done to advance our understanding of EDI and improve accessibility in all of its activities. We are working to become a more Equitable, Diverse and Inclusive organisation,

and through our international profile and extensive partnerships, we are committed to playing an active role in building a more equitable and accessible society.

2.Objectives

2.1 In order to effectively implement its commitment to being an equitable and diverse organisation, CIFF has identified the following objectives for 2025 - 2026:

Strategy

- Ensure EDI is embedded in our current CIFF Strategy as a cross-cutting theme and value
- Establish KPI's against our EDI goals and ambitions to track our progress annually..

Culture

- Conduct regular internal and external EDI surveys, engaging CIFF staff, Board members, audiences, filmmakers, and key stakeholders to identify priorities and establish measurable benchmarks for progress.
- Foster an inclusive, respectful and equitable working culture for all staff and collaborators.
- Provide regular EDI and anti-bias training to all staff and Board members, tailored to role and responsibility.

Programming

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- Embed EDI and intersectionality into programming and selection processes to ensure that the festival reflects the full diversity of contemporary society.
- Continue to develop and support programmes and partnerships that amplify underrepresented voices, experiences, and perspectives in film and media.

Engagement

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- Ensure all visitors experience a welcoming, respectful, and accessible environment, regardless of background or lived experience.
- Actively diversify the staff team and contribute to wider sector change by supporting current, emerging, and future talent from historically marginalised or underrepresented communities.
- Explore and implement ways to enhance the physical, digital, and sensory accessibility of the Festival and all year-round events.
- Ensure that all CIFF promotional, brand, and communications materials reflect diverse representation in content, language, and imagery.
- Commit to fair and equitable remuneration for all artists and arts workers, aligned with the Arts Council's "Pay the Artist" policy.

Monitoring & Evaluation

- Monitor and report on diversity amongst our programme (countries of production, gender balance for directors/ producers/writers)
- Conduct regular audits of recruitment, HR, and organisational policies with a focus on removing barriers and improving equity and inclusion.
- Work toward and achieve a Bronze “Investors in Diversity” Award as a minimum benchmark for institutional accountability.

Scope

This policy applies to the organisation, its Board members, employees, volunteers, partners and to any external stakeholders which are supported by or engage with the organisation.

Diversity & inclusion imposes rights and responsibilities on every member of staff. All employees, the Board of Directors, and volunteers will be informed that a Diversity & Inclusion Policy is in operation and that they are bound to comply with its requirements. The policy will also be drawn to the attention of external stakeholders, job applicants and audiences.

The policy ensures that our statutory equality duties outlined in the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 are met.

The 9 Grounds are defined as being:

- Gender
- Civil status
- Family status
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Age
- Disability
- Race (includes race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins)
- Membership of the travelling community.

Key Equality & Diversity Concepts

Diversity can be defined as the visible and non-visible differences between individuals. These differences can be related to race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, sexual orientation, and gender, as well as the many differences in values, attitudes, beliefs, cultural views, skills, knowledge, education, background, employment, parenthood, marital status, and life experiences of every individual.

Equal Opportunities can be defined as ensuring all those involved with or wishing to be involved with the organisation, regardless of their diversity, are provided with opportunity based on their ability or potential to perform the required activity.

Discrimination is unequal treatment of an individual because of their membership of a particular class or group, such as sex, race, or trade union. It may be direct, for

example, refusing to send someone on a training course because they are married or have children. It may be indirect, for example, declaring a post as being suitable only for a full-time member of staff without proper justification (i.e., establishing the need for a full-time member of staff rather than for part-timers or job sharing).

Discrimination may be subtle and unconscious and may not be easy to identify. For example, discrimination sometimes results from general assumptions about the capabilities, characteristics and interests of particular groups or individuals, which are allowed to influence the treatment of staff or job applicants or clients. This includes unconscious bias.

Harassment or bullying has the effect of causing undue stress on individuals and of de-motivating them. Harassment or bullying of any kind will not be tolerated and serves to undermine the safe, supportive, and welcoming environment which CIFF wishes to encourage.

Management and Delivery of this policy

Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement are the responsibility of everyone within CIFF.

The Leadership team of CIFF is committed to embedding Diversity & inclusion within the business, ensuring that everything we do and the way it is done, makes reference to and considers the impact upon our equality objectives.

CIFF uses the procurement process to ensure that its partners and external stakeholders operate their businesses with similar equality objectives and delivers its services with the same ethos.

It is the responsibility of CIFF's Chief Executive to implement, monitor and evaluate the Diversity & Inclusion policy in terms of employment practices (selection, recruitment, and retention) and service delivery. The Chief Executive is also under a duty to ensure that the Board of Directors is regularly kept updated in terms of the policy's implementation. Additionally, the implications for the Board arising from the decisions it makes and the policies it introduces must be made clear to the Board.

The Policy Statement (at paragraph 1.1) will be communicated to all staff, volunteers, visitors, customers/audiences, and other stakeholders using a variety of methods such as the staff intranet, the website, displayed in offices and where appropriate included in publications.

Annual work plans are in place, which specifically address the Diversity & Inclusion aspects of all areas of work for staff and the Board of Directors; these support the delivery of the objectives contained within this policy.

Our staff will receive appropriate training to ensure they understand their responsibility not to discriminate and to treat everyone with respect and dignity. Staff are expected to reflect on and be aware of personal prejudices, unconscious bias and stereotypes and avoid labels at all times.

All staff will be made aware of and follow the requirements in the Dignity and Respect in the Workplace Policy.

Existing processes will be used to review and investigate any complaints in relation to discrimination, harassment or bullying as follows:

- staff - Disciplinary and Grievance procedures
- customers (those using our services) - Complaints procedure

It is expected that when staff or Board Members represent CIFF at any time, including through attendance at committees, meetings with external stakeholders and contact with customers, they will ensure that the diversity & inclusion principles and practices outlined in this policy are adhered to.

When representing CIFF on the committees of other agencies, each staff member or Board Member will endeavour to ensure that diversity & inclusion principles and practices are adopted by those agencies.

We will use an Equality Impact Assessments framework to regularly review our organisational policies, to minimise the possibility of directly or indirectly discriminating against any group or individual as a result of our working methodologies.

Selection, Recruitment and Retention

CIFF aims to promote Diversity & Inclusion as an employer. It also aims to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements that cannot be shown to be justifiable within the context of the policy.

Selection, recruitment, training, promotion, and employment practices generally will be subject to regular review to ensure they comply with this policy. In particular, selection and recruitment procedures will be reviewed annually in order to constantly improve Diversity & Inclusion practices and respond to changes in legislation. CIFF will monitor data on all applicants as well as those that are successful in order to identify any practices that unintentionally discriminate against specific groups.

We will take whatever positive action is required where it can be shown that under-representation of any particular group has occurred in recruitment. Where appropriate and legally permissible employees from under-represented groups will be given training and encouragement in order to promote diversity & inclusion within CIFF.

Employees involved in the selection and recruitment process, and in the management of staff, will receive appropriate training to ensure they recognise when they are making stereotypical assumptions or judgements about people, and

avoid any discriminatory practices in the way in which they shortlist, recruit or manage employees. This will include unconscious bias training.

We regard discrimination, harassment, abuse, victimisation or bullying of staff, customers or of others in the course of work as disciplinary offences that could be regarded as gross misconduct. Condoning such behaviour could also be treated as a disciplinary offence. As well as disciplining the perpetrator(s), we will give appropriate support to people who complain of harassment of themselves or others.

CIFF has considered the working practices it has in place to address inequality, and discrimination and how it promotes fairness for all. Examples of these against each of the protected characteristics are given below but is not a definitive list of all that CIFF does:

- 1.1.1. We recognise that employees have different needs at different stages during their career, for example to balance work and caring responsibilities. We will attempt to accommodate staff requests to work flexibly, whether part-time, remotely or,
- 1.1.2. some other working arrangement, for whatever reason, so long as agreement is consistent with the needs of the organisation. We will also encourage initiatives designed to help staff who wish to return to work after a career break.
- 1.1.3. Our terms and conditions of employment allow for paternity and partner leave in addition to standard maternity leave, in accordance with current legislation. Allowance is also made for compassionate and dependant leave to deal with domestic emergencies through our family friendly policies.
- 1.1.4. We recognise that organisations are obliged, under the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 to make reasonable accommodations to support Disabled people and enable them to do their job without unnecessary difficulty. We will make accommodations which are reasonable, whether or not we are obliged to do so by law, and whether or not a disabled applicant or employee is covered by the definition of ‘disabled’ under the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015
- 1.1.5. We are committed to ensuring employees do not experience discrimination (or less favourable opportunities/treatment) based on their race, religion or belief by: -
 - Allowing time and, if possible, a place for prayer during the working day and at the workplace as appropriate
 - Considering employees' dietary requirements in catering for staff, and when providing facilities for staff to eat and store food
 - Allowing staff of particular faiths to take their holidays for religious festivals and other religious observance

- Trying to arrange job interviews or other important work meetings at times when they do not clash with important religious festivals
 - Not imposing a dress code with which people of a particular religion cannot comply.
- 1.1.6. We will not discriminate on grounds of age in recruitment, promotion, training, or the availability of benefits - such as pension contributions or health insurance.
- 1.1.7. We will not discriminate on the grounds of gender, where an individual is in the process of gender reassignment or where an individual has completed this reassignment.
- 1.1.8. CIFF will not discriminate on the grounds of marriage or civil partnership and will support individual needs as required.
- 1.1.9. We will not discriminate on the grounds of an individual's sex or on the grounds of the sexual orientation providing everyone, whether a member of staff or an applicant for a home, with exactly the same opportunity to achieve their goals.

As part of its talent management strategy, CIFF will operate an annual staff appraisal system. Training or education development to enhance potential within the existing job, arising out of needs identified through appraisal or from other circumstances, will, where appropriate or possible, be provided. We may, in certain circumstances, allow for paid or unpaid leave for training or educational purposes.

CIFF's retention, reward and progression processes are fair and take account of the social, domestic, cultural, and physical obstacles to people progressing. We seek to identify where these exist for individuals and take actions to limit these where necessary.

We undertake review of pay and continually work towards eliminating any unfair pay gaps where these are identified.

All training opportunities will be published widely through Line Managers to all appropriate employees, and not in such a way as to exclude or disproportionately reduce the numbers of applicants from a particular group. In all training opportunities we will pay due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination on the grounds set out in this policy.

Service Delivery

We will use a variety of methods to regularly consult with our customers and audiences. We will gather their views on existing and planned services, including changes to provision.

We will make public our commitment to combating discriminatory attitudes where these are encountered by publishing this policy widely amongst staff, partners, recognised trade unions and external stakeholders and in a variety of formats.

7.3 We will provide space for inclusion and representation in our Festival programming and year round programming.

7.4 We will continue to share stories from diverse, marginalised voices that expose injustice, promote understanding and advocate for equality.

7.5 We recognise the critical role the Arts play in today's culture and accept our responsibility to make positive change through our work and our practices.

Procurement

CIFF is committed to working with a wide range of suppliers and contractors, from local businesses through to large multi-nationals across a wide range of different types of contracts and purchases.

Diversity & inclusion will be considered during the procurement process and on the award of contracts there will be an expectation that contractors comply with the relevant legislation and principles of this policy.

Each contractor that engages in the CIFF procurement process will be required to hold the appropriate certification and qualifications for the works and services they are submitting a bid to carry out. The application process will require the contractor to provide evidence of a formal Diversity & Inclusion policy further supported by evidence of training delivered to staff, the provision of information and a commitment to on-going support and training.

The extent will be dependent on the nature of the work and size of the contractor, but examples of compliance requirements may include contractors being required to:

- Provide Diversity & Inclusion training for all staff who engage with the Festival, or for their staff to attend CIFF's Diversity & Inclusion training
- Carry out Diversity & Inclusion monitoring of their staff and to take action to deal with any under-representation of particular groups
- Undertake 'reasonable accommodations' when delivering services for customers.

Monitoring and Evaluation

CIFF will systematically evaluate its services and the effectiveness of its Diversity & Inclusion policy by a variety of means including staff turnover and retention; both internal and external surveys; monitoring the application pool of future job applicants; tracking complaints; customer feedback.

Information gathered through the complaints, grievances, disciplinary or other appropriate processes will be analysed by the 9 Grounds of Discrimination where this information is available to identify any particular trends. Where any negative trends are identified, these will be investigated fully, and recommendations made to the Board.

We will report annually to the Board on the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation activities, including any trends in relation to particular 9 Grounds.

Review Cycle

Responsibility for review of this policy sits with CIFF, its Executive and the CIFF Board.

A formal review will be completed yearly and submitted to the Board for evaluation and approval.

Additionally, an interim review would be conducted in the following circumstances:

- A change is made to relevant legislation, including but not limited to the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 and the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018
- The investigation into a negative trend indicates a review of this policy is appropriate
- An external review of our services identifies the need for a policy review