



EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We aim to create an environment where diversity is recognised, valued, and celebrated

Next review
September 2025



Equality and Diversity Policy

This policy applies to all activities performed by or on behalf of International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals.

1. Statement of Intent

International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals is committed to promoting equality, fairness, and respect. We aim to create an environment where diversity is recognised, valued, and celebrated. We will provide equal opportunities for all members to develop and to fulfil their potential. We will engage fully with our diverse society.

We will take care to assess the impact of our policies and their implementation on race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity and age equality.

This policy is to be read alongside the Dignity Policy.

2. Key definitions

2.1. Protected Characteristics

Race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sex or sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity and age equality are the 'Protected Characteristics' contained in the Equality Act 2010 (as amended).

These also correspond broadly with the headings under which citizens are legally protected from discrimination in employment and other aspects of participation in society, in equality legislation in the Republic of Ireland, namely the Equal Status Acts 2000 to 2018.

2.2. What is Diversity?

Diversity is celebrating what makes us all different and ensuring that we include a range of different people as our members, employees and outside contacts.

When people think of diversity, they may think first of ethnicity and race and then gender. However, diversity is much broader than that.

Diversity includes, but is not limited to, respecting and recognising differences in: age, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, physical abilities or qualities, race, sexual orientation, educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, partnership status, religion or belief, parental status, caring responsibilities and work experience.

Diversity management can be broadly defined as accepting, valuing, and getting the best from all individuals whatever their group or individual differences such as communications style, career or vocational experiences and other factors.

Every member, whatever they look like and however they operate, maximises their potential and value to the team. Everyone is valued as an individual as well as a member

of the team. Everyone is themselves and seeks to be successful as themselves rather than conforming to a mould.

In short, every individual has a right to their own success and a responsibility to the success of the team. They have a right to celebrate individuality and a responsibility to conform to the team's policies, ethos and codes of behaviour.

2.3. What is Discrimination?

International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals is committed to maintaining an environment which is free from discrimination and harassment of other people including current or prospective members and employees.

Discrimination takes many different forms, but generally involves consciously or unconsciously treating someone unfairly or differently because of who they are or because of their Protected Characteristics.

The following forms of discrimination are prohibited under this policy and are unlawful:

- 2.3.1 Direct discrimination: treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic.
- 2.3.2 Indirect discrimination: a provision, criterion or practice that applies to everyone but adversely affects people with a particular Protected Characteristic more than others and is not justified.
- 2.3.3 Harassment: this includes sexual harassment and other unwanted conduct related to a Protected Characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating someone's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.
- 2.3.4 Victimization: retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else's complaint about discrimination or harassment.
- 2.3.5 Disability discrimination: this includes direct and indirect discrimination, any unjustified less favourable treatment because of the effects of a disability, and failure to make reasonable adjustments to alleviate disadvantages caused by a disability.

3. Policy

International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals is committed to providing equitable treatment to all those we deal with as an organisation. The Fellowship's objectives are to promote and develop diversity initiatives with a view to matching and, if possible, improving on best practice. It actively endorses relevant programmes of action and codes of practice on all aspects of diversity.

International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals aims to provide an environment where we will:

- 3.1. Encourage branches and subgroups to recruit membership that reflects, at all levels, the diversity of the communities where they operate and of society as a whole.
- 3.2. Treat all our members, employees and outside contacts with dignity and respect.
- 3.3. Provide members with the opportunity to develop and realise their full potential.
- 3.4. Take positive action to secure equality of opportunity.

- 3.5. Ensure that our recruitment, selection, and Rotary career progression processes are fair, objective and free from bias or stereotyping.
- 3.6. Endeavour to ensure that branches and subgroups deliver excellent service to their respective diverse communities.

4. Objectives

Our diversity and equality objectives are focused on three key areas:

4.1. Service

We will:

- 4.1.1 Strive to review all services from the perspective of the International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals diversity principles to ensure they meet the differing needs of individuals and groups.
- 4.1.2 Provide clear information about International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals services in ways that are accessible and meet the community needs.
- 4.1.3 Monitor the physical features of our premises to consider whether they might place anyone with a disability at a substantial disadvantage. Where necessary, we will take reasonable steps to improve access. If we consider a particular adjustment would not be reasonable, we will explain our reasons and try to find an alternative solution where possible.
- 4.1.4 Consult with different groups on service needs and provision.
- 4.1.5 Monitor and evaluate services to ensure that they do not unfairly discriminate.
- 4.1.6 Ensure equal access to the Rotary GB&I complaints procedure.
- 4.1.7 Assess our policies, functions and practices to consider their impact on equality in line with legal requirements and best practice policy.

4.2. Recruitment and Retention

We will:

- 4.2.1 Monitor the selection process to ensure it is free from discrimination and openly accountable. Any information provided in this respect is voluntary and will not adversely affect an individual's chances of recruitment or any other decision related to their membership or employment.
- 4.2.2 Review and monitor all other policies and procedures to ensure that they do not inadvertently allow unfair discrimination to occur.
- 4.2.3 Ensure that access to information, procedures and records is as open and transparent as possible.
- 4.2.4 Encourage a culture and environment free from discrimination and harassment.
- 4.2.5 Develop a culture which encourages Rotary networks to share best practice and provide specific support to diverse groups.

- 4.2.6 Encourage and help Rotarians to reach their full potential.
- 4.2.7 Assess our policies, functions and practices to consider their impact on equality in line with legal requirements and best practice policy.

Working in Partnership

- 4.3. We will:
 - 4.3.1 Work with others in partnership to endeavour to provide an environment free from unfair discrimination and harassment.
 - 4.3.2 Encourage others to adopt this policy.

5. Who is responsible for this policy?

Each Board member and Trustee has overall responsibility for the effective operation of this policy and for ensuring compliance with discrimination law. Day-to-day operational responsibility for this policy, including regular reviews of this policy, has been delegated to the Trustees.

All Board members and Trustees must set an appropriate standard of behaviour, lead by example and ensure that those they manage adhere to the policy and promote our aims and objectives with regard to equal opportunities.

This policy will be reviewed annually. Please contact the Trustees if you have any questions or concerns.

6. Breaches of this policy

Board member and Trustees will take a strict approach to breaches of this policy.

Complaints about harassment, bullying or discrimination should be reported to the Chair of the Fellowship and will be treated in confidence and investigated as appropriate.

There must be no victimisation or retaliation against members who complain about discrimination. We encourage the reporting of all types of potential discrimination, as this assists us in ensuring that diversity, equity and inclusion principles are adhered. However, making a false allegation deliberately and in bad faith will result in exclusion from the organisation and/or disciplinary action.

7. Reference

Equality Act 2010 accessed July 2023 Available at [Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15)