Equality Action Plan 2024-25

As the UK's principal cultural relations organisation the British Council is strongly committed to equality, diversity and inclusion. Our work is centered on building meaningful, enduring and respectful relationships across different cultures. It is essential therefore that we have a strong alignment to principles and practices of diversity and our core values: these include valuing people, integrity, mutuality, professionalism and creativity.

Our **Equality Strategy** and **Equality Policy** set out how we approach the challenges of mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion internationally. We are very proud of our work in this area and have developed innovative methods and tools to encourage progress and success.

This document can be made available in a range of formats on request.

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Action Plan Measure	S75 Category Affected									Action Required	Measure of Success	Timeline
	Age	Dependents	Disability	Gender	Marital Status	Political Opinion	Race	Religious Belief	Sexual Orientation			
Ensure Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) is mainstreamed into our current practices	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Ongoing screening of all new and revised policies Use of EDI planning tools for all event and programme planning	Improved awareness and understanding of inequalities and how these can be addressed	Ongoing

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										Encourage mandatory EDI values to be integrated into job descriptions and specific EDI objective in performance management process		
										Contribute to British Council's Diversity Assessment Framework (DAF) by providing examples of our strengths in diversity practise and where improvements could be achieved across a range of indicators including recruitment, access, staff training, inclusion and leadership.		
Monitor data and data accuracy across all protected characteristics for staff within British Council Northern Ireland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Monitor improvements to the system for obtaining equality monitoring data for staff across all pay bands.	Accurate up to date information, easily retrieved and accessible to relevant staff when required	Ongoing
										Ensure that equality monitoring data is appropriately collected, with as much consistency as possible, held as confidential sensitive data, and able to be provided in a format for reporting purposes		
Report on EDI activity at all monthly staff meetings to further develop an inclusive organisational culture and facilities,										Update EDI action plan, including provision of professional development opportunities in capability and leadership through EDI related training.	Foster an inclusive working environment for all Northern Ireland colleagues	Ongoing

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based on the corporate EDI Strategy and ensure a co-ordinated and joined up approach to EDI across the Northern Ireland office	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Embed EDI related activities and processes into everyday programming to ensure EDI is mainstreamed across the Northern Ireland operation		
										Focus on celebrating international diversity days, employee wellbeing and physical environment and mainstreaming EDI into our everyday work inc use of corporate guides.		
Improve communication on EDI updates, news and best practice to all British Council Northern Ireland staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Regular and specific updates on ongoing EDI issues via email and Microsoft Teams folder	All staff fully conversant on EDI activities Increased awareness of the particular needs of S75 groups, measures which need to be taken and actual outcomes achieved on an ongoing basis	Ongoing
										Activities to foster inclusion such as celebration of key international days, diversity weeks, volunteering initiatives		
										Update EDI resources toolkit and Microsoft Teams EDI platform		
Revise EDI training plan for all British Council Northern Ireland staff										Mandatory EDI training to be completed by all staff	All staff fully conversant on EDI activities Increased awareness of	

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Northern Ireland staff	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Additional EDI learning and development undertaken such as a) specific workshops delivered by EDI team, b) specific training by Equality Commission c) attendance at ongoing EDI global/UK wide workshops and webinars with a specific focus on disability awareness, anti-racism and unconscious bias (in line with the priorities of the anti-racism action plan) and gender	Increased awareness of the particular needs of S75 groups, measures which need to be taken and actual outcomes achieved on an ongoing basis	Ongoing
Reasonable Adjustments - record and monitor annual data on number of reasonable adjustment requests received and actioned (internally and externally)			✓							Maintain RA log and ensure all external venues used and British Council premises are accessible and any required measures put in place	Increased consultation and participation for those with disability	Ongoing
Remain vigilant of issues affecting disabled staff and customers and ensure an accessible environment										RAs recorded and actioned.		
										Increase work in Disablity Arts projects		
										Staff volunteering opportunities in disability organisations		
Action to help make progress towards the protected characteristics										Encourage female staff to undertake coaching and mentoring programmes for women	Improvement in percentage increases in the number of women,	

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targets, particularly in senior management			✓	✓			✓			Work experience and internship programmes to encourage employment of disabled people or other under-represented groups	minority ethnic and disabled staff in senior management positions across the UK in line with corporate targets.	Ongoing
										Take forward recommendations from the Anti-Racism Action Plan		
										Ensure diversity of recruitment panels and ensure all role profiles are accessible and use inclusive language		
										Consider possible recruitment training from Equality Commission in line with the reasonable adjustments duty		
										EDI working group to Identify under-representation and ways to address it		
External Monitoring – monitoring of customers from the protected characteristic groups taking active part in programmes and activities offered by the British Council Northern Ireland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Widen scope of monitoring to other proframmes and events, identify trends and under-representation. Take affirmative action taken to support greater participation in programmes and activities. Inequalities identified and measures taken to address these.Share results with programme staff.	Increased participation	Ongoing

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Recruitment and induction – encourage job applications from a diverse audience and an understanding of EDI from the outset	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Audit our current recruitment processes to assess accessibility and take appropriate action	Try to establish a workforce which is representative of the societies we operate in.	Ongoing
										Perform exit interviews for all staff who leave the organisation	Obtain staff feedback on EDI practices	
										Ensure induction for all staff (short and long term) consistently covers our Equality Policy, Equality Scheme and mandatory diversity training	Staff will understand the British Council's commitment to diversity as part of and in support of our cultural relations work.	
										Identify and implement anti-racism training opportunities for staff		
										Open advertisements across range of fora to a diverse audience and specialist diversity recruiters in Northern Ireland. Push out job opportunities to external equality organisations using recruitment network list		