

# Diversity & Inclusion Policy (DRAFT)

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## Contents

1. Purpose.....	2
2. Diversity & Inclusion Objectives .....	2
3. Scope .....	3
4. Key Equality & Diversity Concepts.....	3
5. Management and Delivery of this policy.....	4
6. Selection, Recruitment and Retention of staff.....	4
7. Delivery of Membership Services .....	5
8. Monitoring and Evaluation .....	5
9. Review Cycle .....	5

## **1. Purpose**

### **1.1. Policy Statement**

The Garda Representative Association (GRA) recognises that its members and staff come from diverse backgrounds, with varying experiences and needs. We are committed to ensuring diversity & inclusion is embedded into our day-to-day working practices. The GRA actively promotes fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement and is committed to continuous improvement.

- 1.2. Through our policies, adherence to the Constitution & Rules and in support of our members, the GRA is committed to promoting equality and fairness and combating discrimination. This applies to everyone, regardless of Gender, Civil status, Family status, Sexual orientation, Religion, Age, Disability, Race (includes race, colour, nationality or ethnic or national origins) or Membership of the travelling community.

## **2. Diversity & Inclusion Objectives**

- 2.1. In order to effectively implement its commitment to being an equal and diverse employer, and membership organisation, the GRA has identified the following D&I objectives, which support the achievement of the Objectives as set out in the GRA Constitution and Rules:

- Provide the organisation's leaders with the skills and knowledge to fully embed fairness, respect, equality, diversity, inclusion and engagement into the organisation's culture, strategy, and processes.
- Provide diversity & inclusion training to all staff and GRA Reps, which will include content on their responsibilities, relevant legislation, and this policy
- Ensure that no member receives less favourable treatment than any other.
- Ensure opportunities are accessible to all, introducing reasonable accommodations to facilitate this where required.
- Gather data to enable the monitoring of member and staff satisfaction to identify and address any negative trends by the 9 Grounds of discrimination.
- Create an environment where staff and members are treated fairly and with dignity and respect.
- Enforce a zero-tolerance approach in relation to discrimination, bullying, harassment, and inappropriate behaviour, thoroughly investigating any reported incidents and taking appropriate actions.
- Provide a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment for members where everyone can receive the advice and support they need.
- Challenge discrimination and promote diversity.
- Provide training to staff on GRA's approach to diversity & inclusion, its commitment to zero tolerance in relation to discrimination, bullying, harassment and inappropriate behaviour and the contents of this policy.
- Act as role models to GRA members and An Garda Síochána (ASG) as a whole.

### 3. Scope

- 3.1. This policy applies to the GRA, its members, employees, partners and to any external stakeholders which are supported by or engage with the GRA.
- 3.2. Diversity & inclusion imposes rights and responsibilities on every employee and member. All employees and the members will be informed that a Diversity & inclusion policy is in operation and that they are bound to comply with its requirements.
- 3.3. 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.
- 3.4. 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.

### 4. Key Equality & Diversity Concepts

- 4.1. **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.
- 4.2. **Equal Opportunities** can be defined as ensuring all those involved with or wishing to be involved with the GRA, regardless of their characteristics, are provided with the opportunity to do so.
- 4.3. **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 an opportunity as being suitable only for a specific group of members.

- 4.4. 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 GRA members. This includes unconscious bias.
- 4.5. **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 the GRA wishes to encourage.

## **5. Management and Delivery of this policy**

- 5.1. Fairness, Respect, Equality, Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement are the responsibility of everyone within the GRA, both staff and members.
- 5.2. The Officer Board of the GRA is committed to embedding Diversity & inclusion within the Association, ensuring that everything we do and the way it is done, makes reference to and considers the impact upon our Diversity & Inclusion objectives.
- 5.3. The Policy Statement (at paragraph 1.1) will be communicated to all staff and members using a variety of methods such as the staff intranet, the website, displayed in offices and where appropriate included in publications.
- 5.4. 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 be aware of personal prejudices, unconscious bias and stereotypes and avoid labels at all times.
- 5.5. 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
  - members - Complaints procedure
- 5.6. It is expected that when staff or GRA Reps represent the GRA at any time, including through attendance at committees, meetings with external stakeholders and contact with members, they will ensure that the diversity & inclusion principles and practices outlined in this policy are adhered to.

## **6. Selection, Recruitment and Retention of staff**

- 6.1. The GRA 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.

- 6.2. 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. The GRA will monitor data on all applicants as well as those that are successfully appointed in order to identify any practices that unintentionally discriminate against specific groups.

## **7. Delivery of Membership Services**

- 7.1. We will use a variety of methods to regularly consult with our members. We will gather their views on existing and planned services, including changes to provision.
- 7.2. We will make public our commitment to combating discriminatory attitudes where these are encountered by publishing this policy widely amongst staff, and members and in a variety of formats.

## **8. Monitoring and Evaluation**

- 8.1. The GRA will systematically evaluate its services and the effectiveness of its diversity & inclusion policy by a variety of means.
- 8.2. 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 Officer Board and Central Executive Committee (CEC).
- 8.3. We will report annually to the Annual Conference on the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation activities, including any trends in relation to particular 9 Grounds.

## **9. Review Cycle**

- 9.1. Responsibility for review of this policy sits with the General Secretary of the GRA.
- 9.2. A formal review will be completed 2-yearly.
- 9.3. 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