



Trinity College Dublin
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath
The University of Dublin

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Equality Committee
Minutes

Meeting of 30th March 2022, 10.00am – 12.00pm
Online, via Zoom

Present: Prof F Sheerin (Chair), Associate Vice Provost for Equality Diversity and Inclusion (Prof L Leeson), Prof S Draper, Dr B Ghosh, Ms S Maguire, Ms K O'Toole-Brennan, Prof M Ruffini.

In Attendance: Ms S Cantwell (notetaker)

Apologies: Ms R Gaynor, Dr S O'Brien Green, Prof A Kahane, Mr D Treanor, Ms S Müller-Owens, Mr C O'Donnell.

Equal/21-22/040 Opening

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all.

Equal/21-22/041 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 2nd February 2022 were approved without amendment.

Equal/21-22/042 Matters arising and Action Callover

Gender Expression policy: The current Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy will be updated to align with required College policy formats. A meeting with EDI, HR and Academic Registry is to take place on 5th April to discuss compliance aspects, and feedback will be provided to this committee with the aim of escalating to Board.

In discussion it was noted that there are challenges around HR systems, resources and compliance sector wide. The AVPEDI has met with HR to look at possible solutions. It was agreed that College systems need to be audited and modernized to avoid costly workarounds which may have knock-on effects. Prof Draper noted that Planning Group is looking at financing of a number of essential IT system updates, for example, to facilitate accreditation for modules, which cannot currently be stacked.

The Chair noted that the resource issue is important both for IT and to support EDI and Athena SWAN, and this committee should support the call for funding needed. The Chair and AVPEDI will bring this to the meeting with HR and Academic Registry.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

Equal/21-22/043 Equality Fund

The Chair outlined concerns over the amount of EDI time spent on the Equality Fund. Evaluation is time-consuming with a significant administrative burden. Themes could be better aligned with EDI office activities such as HEA priorities, Athena SWAN, etc. The Chair invited discussion on how to proceed with future calls and particularly around resources to manage the fund.

The group discussed the importance of developing and sharing good EDI practice and raising visibility of the equality grounds by integrating it into existing structures, allowing the EDI office to focus on its own communication strategy and activities happening. It was agreed that continuing the fund separately may not be the best approach. A review of this is needed by the broader Equality Committee rather than the fund subgroup.

It was noted that opportunities to apply for funding can be part of larger initiatives. Small amounts of funding could be used to support Athena SWAN actions in schools, co-funding actions to recognize and reward equality work, which aligns with the new Athena SWAN framework.

The Chair welcomed any further comments by email following this meeting.

ACTION: The Chair and AVPEDI will put together a proposal of how to review this, to bring back to this committee for consideration and approval. Review work would then take place between last meeting of this academic year and Michaelmas term.

KEY UPDATES

Equal/21-22/044

Trinity Colonial Legacies Project

Prof Ciaran O'Neill, project director of Trinity Colonial Legacies, outlined the project genesis and trajectory. A global wave of interest in colonial legacies across institutions was sparked in 2020 by events around Black Lives Matter, which had a knock-on effect on Trinity's reputation, largely focused around George Berkeley. The project was proposed to the School of Histories and Humanities and a postdoctoral fellow, Dr Mobeen Hussain was hired in 2021.

The advisory board, chaired by Mary McAleese, met in February. Key outputs in progress include a book, a lecture series, plus a suite of College and public-wide events and townhalls. An interim project has commenced to document historic enrolments of students of colour at Trinity, and a memo on the de-naming Berkeley was sent to the Provost this month.

This initiative is happening across HEIs globally and the project team are learning from Universities of Capetown, Glasgow, and a range of North American institutions (Georgetown, Yale). Local engagement is with Queens, RIA and UCD.

Prof O'Neill gave an overview of Trinity's position in the colonialism framework and how it differs in Ireland, with wealth primarily derived from colonisation of Irish land leading to both an internal and external system of colonisation. Key College figures include Burke and Berkeley, and the Herbarium is a key site of colonial legacies with the bulk of 19th century collections derived from imperial rule. Anatomy hosts a collection of human remains from across the world.

The Chair thanked Prof O'Neill for his presentation. Website link will be circulated to Committee members.

In discussion it was noted that there is scope to do a past/present/future piece, where there may be overlap with current focus groups. It was also noted that College rituals which persist in the community need to be looked at – Prof O'Neill will link with Prof Draper on this.

Prof O'Neill left the meeting.

Equal/21-22/045 EDI Office and Athena SWAN

IHREC Public sector duty: The Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty stems from Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act (2014). In working to implement the Public Sector Duty, UCD, working with the Irish Universities Association (IUA), are currently developing a toolkit for universities. The IUA will hold a briefing on 1st April and following from this, each university is invited to review the draft toolkit and take part in a validation exercise in the week of 8th April. The EDI team is working to invite wide participation in this process.

LERU Conference: An in-person event, After #MeToo, will take place in Geneva from 1-2 June 2022, organised by the LERU EDI group. This event is relevant to College's Consent Framework activities, and is also a theme on the broader EDI landscape, e.g. the new Athena SWAN framework (Ireland) requires us to discuss mechanisms in place for addressing and eliminating sexual harassment and sexual violence while we must also outline our work in this sphere in the European Commission Horizon Europe Gender Equality Plan requirements.

Landscape review: The EDI review is in progress. The AVPEDI thanked the Academic Secretary and Stephanie Reilly for their work on this. Focus groups have taken place with key parties. External partners from Queens and LERU will visit at the end of April to talk about our existing structures and to help imagine next steps. This will inform work on the EDI strategy currently in progress.

Resourcing: this needs to be looked at in terms of human capital and fiscal contributions. A number of new items have come to EDI this year, including the ASAP scholarships, and sources of funding need to be established. The AVPEDI has spoken with Trinity Development re philanthropic support. New and historical commitments are emerging which are pulling on the budget and work is ongoing to reconcile these and ensure sufficient funding going forward.

Let's Talk About Race in Higher Education online course: The supplier (Marshalls) has requested additional fees to roll this out to students. This is being negotiated by TCD EDI Unit along with IUA and UL who were the leads on this joint project.

ASAP scholarships: These aim to support direct provision students in challenges faced both in applying for and attending university. EDI have actions to follow up with TAP around this.

Consent framework implementation group: Targets are being met. Sectorally, there is no funding in place to do the work we are now obliged to do around this.

EDI is working on a **calendar of events** compiled by Sean Adderley in Trinity INC. This will be shared and suggestions/additions are welcome.

International Women's Day: The IUA published a LinkedIn piece on sexual harassment and sexual violence, with collaboration from Trinity's School of Social Work and Social Policy, Dr Catherine Conlon, Prof Lorraine Leeson and Dr Siobán O'Brien Green.

Athena SWAN: Sarah Fink from Advance HE briefed the University Athena SWAN Committee (UASC) on the new charter. For silver application we need to ensure that Athena SWAN is not a tick box exercise and demonstrating impact is crucial. Bottom-up engagement is needed along with broader ownership of equality work.

Three submissions were made for bronze awards. Announcements are embargoed until 31st March.

Two more schools may submit in the next phase, the last under the old Athena SWAN framework. The scope will now be broader and professional units can also apply for

accreditation. However, we must also be mindful of our limited capacity to deliver support, especially across 2022-2023 as we focus on preparing our institutional application.

Institutional survey: We are ensuring this reflects the new framework and have engaged with key stakeholders for their inputs. The FAHSS Research Ethics Committee is currently reviewing this.

Risk register: The Athena SWAN risk has been shared with the office of the Dean of Research and some with HR.

Workload allocation model working group: This group has met.

National Athena SWAN Practitioners Group: EDI data analyst Sam Williams has been attending the National AS Practitioners group. This provides an opportunity for sharing of good practice and further engagement more generally.

Sarah Fink noted that in a number of HEIs the Athena SWAN committees have merged with or become equality committees. The form and function of this committee might be worth talking about with the Registrar and other relevant parties.

The AVPEDI emphasised the need to work to build a sense across College that equality work is a continuous recursive practice. How equality work is recognised rewarded needs to be considered and what that means for us in terms of legal obligations, moral duty, and fiscal risk. The Chair noted that a commitment to resourcing EDI actions is important.

Equal/21-22/046 Sub-Group Updates

Due to time constraints, it was agreed that the Chair would circulate sub-group updates by email following this meeting.

Equal/21-22/047 Items For Noting

Ms O'Toole Brennan informed the group that the Dublin Learning City Festival takes place next week and TCD is involved. The Provost is to issue a press release around Dublin's North Inner City Learning Neighbourhood.

Equal/21-22/048 Any Other Business

There was no other business. The Chair thanked all present and concluded the meeting.

END