



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

Trinity College Dublin  
The University of Dublin

Equality Committee

Minutes

Meeting of 22 February 2023, 11.00am – 12.30pm  
Online, via Zoom

**Present:** Associate Vice Provost for Equality Diversity and Inclusion (Prof L Leeson) (Chair), Prof S Draper, Dr B Ghosh, Ms S Maguire, Dr S O'Brien Green (Secretary), Prof A Kahane, Mr C O'Donnell, Prof M Ruffini, Mr D Treanor, Ms C Staunton

**In Attendance:** Ms. M Josling (notetaker)

**Apologies:** Prof. F Sheerin, Ms S MacBride, Ms K O'Toole-Brennan.

<b>Equal/22-23/001</b> <b>Opening</b>	The AVPEDI opened the meeting and thanked Ms. Josling for joining as notetaker for this meeting.
<b>Equal/22-23/002</b> <b>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</b>	The minutes of the meeting of 7 December 2022 were approved without amendment.
<b>Equal/22-23/003</b> <b>Matters arising and Action Callover</b>	<b>Matters arising:</b> There were no matters arising. <b>Action Callover:</b>  <b>Consent Manager Role:</b> HEA letter confirming funding for the ESVH (Consent Manager Role) was received week commencing 20 February. HR are progressing the job specification and sizing. It was noted that the job specification should be shared with the appropriate members of the Consent Framework Implementation Oversight Group for inputs.

	<p><b>Race and Ethnic Equality WG</b> launched” The Trinity Tapestry” document on Monday evening – International Day of Social Justice. The document is available for download on the TCD/Equality website. It was mentioned that the first National Race Equality in Higher Education in Ireland Conference, organized by the Higher Education Authority, will take place on 20th March 2023 at the University of Galway. Trinity will have representation at this event.</p> <p><b>Irish Sign Language/English interpreters</b> – Gemma Shannon and Bernadette Ferguson are now in post, formally taking up their roles on Monday (13/2/2023). Their focus is to support engagement between deaf and hearing staff. A committee member suggested a University-wide email should be sent out outlining the purpose of the 2 roles to promote clarity and understanding.</p> <p><b>Diligent Boards for this Committee-</b> The committee agreed that a return to Diligent Boards would facilitate alignment with other principal committees of Board and promote standardisation and confidentiality for the work we do.</p>
ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION	
	No items.
KEY UPDATES	
<p><b>Equal/22-23/004</b> <b>EDI Office and Athena SWAN</b></p>	<p>The AVPEDI presented this update.</p> <p>A good working draft of our institutional Silver Athena Swan (AS) Application is now in hand. Athena Swan accreditation is an institutional requirement of the Higher Education Authority, and an eligibility requirement for Irish government research funding as well as European Commission Horizon Europe funding.</p> <p>The AVPEDI acknowledged the work of Ms. Sam Williams who is coordinating the document and thanked all those who have contributed to the draft.</p>

The draft document is with an external impartial reviewer with significant Athena SWAN expertise - their critical feedback will inform our final submission. The team is also working on costing proposed actions. The document will later be shared with a 2<sup>nd</sup> reviewer, an expert who will bring a European perspective to bear - this will help safeguard the document and actions, supporting our position vis-à-vis Horizon Europe related competitiveness.

It was noted that the new AS Ireland Charter framework covers gender equality and all other equality grounds covered by Irish legislation. The Consent Framework work that we engage in is also incorporated in the application and associated action items.

Deadlines for the progression of the application within College are as follows:

- 12th April – Equality Committee
- 2nd May – EOG
- 24th May – Board
- 7th June – Council
- Submission **before** 16 June 2023 (TBC by Advance HE).

Equality Committee members were asked to:

- Complete & encourage colleagues to complete the EDI in HE training by end April 2023.
- Complete the “Let’s Talk About Race” online module.

**ACTION:** Circulate an e-mail to all Committee members reminding them to complete these training sessions

**EU Commission Gender Equality Prize:** We submit an application for this prize in autumn 2022. We await the announcement of the outcome, due next week. The award comes with prize money of €100,000 in funding.

<p><b>Equal/22-23/005</b> <b>EDI Office Move</b></p>	<p><b>EDI Office move:</b> The move to Arts Block Rooms 2053, 2054, 2056 is now underway. Dr Siobán O’Brien Green was thanked for all she had done in pushing this forward. The process has been very time consuming. Over the last 18 months EDI has engaged with Estates and Facilities to ensure that the room layout, design and furniture facilitates an accessible space, free of trip hazards. The process highlighted some factors around accessibility understanding and processes for moving within College that we shall offer feedback on via the relevant departments and the College’s Estates Policy Committee.</p> <p>An EDI Office open day is planned for March and colleagues will be invited to attend.</p>
<p><b>Equal/22-23/006</b> <b>Sub-Group Updates</b></p>	<p><b>Staff Disability Working Group (SD-WG):</b> Co-Chairs of the Staff Disability Working Group, Dr Patricia McCarthy &amp; Ms. Eimear Reilly were welcomed by the AVPEDI. They noted that as Co-Chairs, they meet the suggested requirement of one person with a lived experience of disability and one person from HR. The WG met for the first time since June 2022 last month. The initial focus is to get the SD-WG back up and working with secretarial support from HR. The group membership will be discussed at the next meeting to ensure a good representation from across the University community. The Group is currently working on developing a work plan for the next year, with a focus on tangible outputs.</p> <p>It was noted that the National Disability Act annual return is due by 31 March 2023. HR and EDI are busy compiling data for this submission, which will also inform the actions of the SD-WG. The Committee discussed the 4% quota which is due to increase to 6% next year, and the University’s strategy to reach the 6% target. It was noted that part of the strategy is to engage in increasing disclosure, and to continue supporting and refining the recruitment process with the aim of being for people with disabilities to consider TCD as an employer of choice. The Committee also</p>

noted the need to increase awareness across University that supports are not just for students, but staff also. It was suggested that part of promoting this awareness includes training middle managers who support staff directly.

The AVPEDI thanked Dr McCarthy and Ms Reilly for their update.

**Equality Fund:**

Prof Fintan Sheerin stepped down as Chair of the Equality Fund Subcommittee in January 2023. John Donaghy, Projects Accounting Business Analyst from FSD was appointed to the Subcommittee in late December 2022 and he has commenced a review of Equality Fund spend since 2020 for us.

A subcommittee meeting was held on 15 February 2023 with a focus on reviewing existing processes, how to best use the fund, and alignment of our goals with the existing Terms of Reference. The group is considering a multi-annual funding model to give more flexibility on projects, as well as looking at a co-fund model to enhance sustainability. A number of models already in place were considered, e.g. Student Union project funding of the "Have your say" fund. However, the extensive tracking and risk that campaign/projects will not take place also must be considered in terms of grant model adopted.

Proposals from the sub-committee included (i) supporting existing projects, (ii) funding administrative and running costs of ongoing projects, (iii) implementing a new plan for the 2023-24 funding cycle.

**Age Friendly Trinity Sub-Committee:** Equality Committee members were asked to contact Dr O'Brien Green or the AVPEDI with any information they might have on the Age Friendly Trinity Sub-Committee (which

	previously reported to Equality Committee) and its outputs.
<p><b>Equal/22-23/007</b>  <b>Other Trinity Bodies</b></p>	<p>Students' Union representative MS. Chloe Staunton provided an update on initiatives around the provision of period products and gender-neutral bathrooms. The SU received €7000 from the Trinity Trust for the provision of period products in College bathrooms. Estates and Facilities are onboard to help with the roll out of this initiative. The aim is to launch the initiative during Health and Sport week. The SU continues to seek a longer-term funding solution.</p>
<p><b>Equal/22-23/008</b>  <b>Items for Noting</b></p>	<p><b>Reform of Principal Committees of Board:</b> A Reform process, led by the Registrar and College Secretary is underway in parallel to the 2022 HEA Act with ongoing consultations. The changes proposed are considerable and includes a review of Principal Committees in College. A major discussion point relates to information flow and sign-off protocols. There was some concern that if Equality Committee was to become a subcommittee of a larger Committee that this could slow down processes. To prepare for change, Equality Committee Terms of Reference will be reviewed during summer 2023.</p> <p><b>Dignity and Respect and Sexual Misconduct Policies:</b> Ms Maguire provided an update. The draft policies were brought to EOG at the end of 2022. Some suggestions were made and these are being incorporated into the policies. The main conversation at EOG revolved around successful implementation and source of funds (for education/training/awareness programmes, the consent manager role, consent case workers, websites, roll out, etc.). A responsive website is in preparation which helps individuals navigate the policies relative to their context (e.g. are they a student or a staff member navigating the process). Documentation associated with these policies is due to go back to EOG for consideration and approval this term.</p>

	<p><b>Update on response and supports for Trinity community impacted by earthquakes in Turkiye and Syria:</b> Ms. Louise Staunton from Trinity Global provided this update. The Trinity Global Incident Response Unit was reconstituted two weeks ago to provide support to the TCD community affected by the earthquakes. The unit has engaged with students to support them during this time. Students have requested fundraisers to support their communities. The first fundraiser was held last Wednesday, and another will be held in 5-6 weeks. Long term supports will need to be arranged for future student requirements. HR is working with Global on identifying the impacted staff population and it was noted that while HR is not included in the membership of the Global Incident Response Unit currently, that this will be reviewed.</p>
<p><b>Equal/22-23/009</b> <b>Any Other Business</b></p>	<p><b>Dublin Learning City Festival Applications open:</b> Kathleen O'Toole-Brennan (TAP) shared that applications are open to host events as part of Dublin Learning City Festival 2023! <a href="http://www.dublinlearningcity.ie/festival/">www.dublinlearningcity.ie/festival/</a></p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> The Athena Swan silver institutional application will be the main point for discussion at our next meeting</p>
<p><b>END</b></p>	
	<p>The Chair thanked all and closed the meeting.</p>