



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 10th November 2021, 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, Ms R Gaynor, Dr Bidisha Ghosh, Prof A Kahane, Ms S Maguire, Ms S Müller-Owens, Mr C O'Donnell, Ms K O'Toole-Brennan, Mr D Treanor, and Secretary / Equality Officer (Dr S O'Brien Green).

In Attendance: Ms S Cantwell (notetaker)

Apologies: Prof M Ruffini

Equal/21-22/012 Opening

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed new member Susan Maguire, HR representative.

Equal/21-22/013 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

No changes were recommended, and the minutes were approved.

Equal/21-22/014 Matters arising

EDI in HE /unconscious bias training: Dr O'Brien Green clarified that she is liaising with Fidela Haffey in HR to look at training needs and providers and Susan Cantwell is working on collating available training in College at the moment. Some shortcomings of what has

previously been available were acknowledged along with the need to look more closely at appropriate trainings for the hybrid work setting.

Ms Ghosh consulted her school on the issue of staff paying for unconscious bias training and it was felt this should be done at school or university level not at an individual staff level.

Equal/21-22/015 Action Callover

Terminology for students: The agreed change to the term ‘freshman’ has not been adopted across college. An amendment has been made to the statutes and been approved by Board and will go to Fellows next.

Equality Fund: Payments for last year’s projects are still being finalised and the issue of funds not rolling over is being looked at. The call for new applications has not moved forward and is pending a meeting of the Fund Subcommittee. Subcommittee membership is to be reviewed and there is a need to meet urgently on this.

Changes to board nomination forms: Liaison with DPO has taken places and any changes will require changes to Statutes. Considering Statues may require changes in relation to HEA Bill once enacted this would be the opportune time to look at potential Board nomination text changes too.

Invitation of Registrar: this issue was deemed not to be urgent as next Provost election will not be for 9 years.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

Equal/21-22/016 EDI in HE Online Training

The EDI in HE training is live on the Equality website and work on a reporting system is ongoing. Discussion took place around a timeline for training completion and the option to take modules separately in order to give staff sufficient time to complete the new online training– a year was suggested by the Committee. The issue of revising modules and the requirement to repeat the training was also discussed and Dr O’Brien Green noted that the IUA could guide on this. Prof Leeson will raise this with the IUA leads.

It was felt that this training should have a broader reach than just selection committees.

There is a need to work closely with HR to regularise this, e.g. it could be tied into role grading. The reporting process will enable verification of staff who have completed the EDI

in HE online training and may also provide data on uptake and completion of the course for Athena SWAN and other relevant reporting requirements.

It was noted that EDI should become a standard item on heads of school agendas and at faculty level in order to embed it in the culture.

Equal/21-22/017 Sanitary Products for the TCD Community

Ms S Müller-Owens gave an update on this campaign which relates to a successful Equality Fund project. Its aim is for the provision of sanitary products to become sustainable and to look at extending to the wider College community. Period products are currently available in a number of bathrooms across campus. Legislation may mandate this at a later date but in the meantime it is proposed to use some Student Union funding with financial support also being sought from College. The use of eco-friendly and sustainable period products would also tie in with the eco-friendly campus.

The group discussed whether this cost could be absorbed at Estates and Facilities level and the Chair agreed that this needs to be centralised using preferred suppliers, via normal procurement routes. It was suggested to put this on the agenda for Planning Group.

ACTION: Include this item in the Equality Committee report to be brought before Board.

KEY UPDATES

Equal/21-22/018 AEMR Presentation to Board

The Annual Equality Monitoring Report (AEMR) was presented and accepted at Board. Feedback was helpful and there were a number of constructive suggestions that will be followed up to assist in drafting the next AMER report. This will also involve engagement with Board members who did not wish to accept the AMER. The presentation of the data should be reviewed and context provided for future reports. More clarity is also needed on challenges regarding current data gaps. The report should also have a more accessible format.

[Mr O'Donnell left the meeting after this item]

Equal/21-22/019 EDI Unit and Athena SWAN

The AVPEDI provided an update in relation to the work of the EDI Unit and Athena SWAN.

Further items accepted at Board were the revised accessibility policy and an updated overview of gender equality amongst TCD Fellows.

Athena SWAN

12 schools received their awards in person and photos were taken for the Advance HE Athena SWAN Ireland award ceremony, held online on 20th October. The launch of the new Charter will require examinations and an updated of expectations and requirements going forward.

EDI spaces

Dr O'Brien Green has been visiting breastfeeding spaces and prayer/faith spaces around College. A staff and student survey on breastfeeding spaces is being developed and will go live later this month. A mystery shopper will also test these facilities and report back. The AVPEDI commended the sensory spaces created by the Disability Service and noted that Mr Treanor can advise on EDI-related spaces going forward.

Workload models

There are concerns about the lack of a workload allocation model which impacts those returning from family leave in terms of gender and workload. The AVPEDI informed the group that the VP has requested that she chair a committee on workload allocation, which will be convened next term and report back to EOG.

Discussion took place around the need to enable information flow to all school members and to tie in work happening in separate areas. This should be flagged through school executives.

Performance funding

In the last round of submissions for HEA 2021 performance funding, Trinity expected to receive funding as in previous years, but no funding was awarded. Five institutions received

€1 million, only two of which were universities. There appears to be a potential change in the pattern of funding disseminated.

Gender Equality Plans

The European Commission (EC) Horizon Europe research funding requires institutional gender equality plans to be in place by January 2022. Further guidance is awaited to establish the alignment between Athena SWAN Awards and Charter requirements and these new plans. The TORCH project focuses on open science, research integrity and gender equality issues and a workshop on European university alliances is happening next week to guide and inform on the new EC plans.

SALI chair

There are no further updates on the SALI posts from the HEA.

Consent Framework Oversight Group

The group has been working hard and a date for the launch of Speak Out will be confirmed soon, potentially late November.

Equal/21-22/020 Sub-Group Updates

Staff Disability Sub-Group

The Chair welcomed Dr Na Fu to join the meeting to present an update on the Staff Disability Sub-Group. The group met in April and held a planning workshop in June. Two funding applications were submitted, unsuccessfully. Dr Fu outlined how TCD is required to meet a target of 6% of employees with disabilities by 2024, increasing from the current staff target of 3%. At least 117 new hires will be required to meet this target, as well as increasing staff sharing and disclosing of disability status.

Dr Fu outlined three proposed projects:

- A landing space on the HR website for people with disabilities;
- Voice – agreed approaches to working on disclosure and engagement survey: to identify gaps, report on best practices and review the output through the lens of those who have a declared disability;

- Awareness and inclusion – seminars/workshops/exhibition to increase awareness, highlight and learn from the experiences of staff with disabilities.

The Chair thanked Dr Fu and commended the ideas and energy of this sub-group. It was noted that career progression also needs to be supported and that funding is badly needed to support this work and projects. This should be on the HR agenda.

[Dr Fu left the meeting after this item]

TAP

Ms O’Toole Brennan informed the group that the National College Awareness campaign is to commence on 22nd November and has been widely embraced by the formal and informal education sector. The campaign will run online and face-to-face events. Guidance resources have been distributed nationally. A platform of diverse voices and role models will share experiences of their pathways into education and the supports they received along the way. TAP have created a resource to support guidance counsellors.

Equality Fund

At this point all 12 completed projects have also completed feedback forms.

Reimbursements have been complicated and subject to delay. One project requested to be postponed from the 2019/2020 Fund round, to be considered by the Equality Fund Sub-committee. Funding from this Fund account has been rolled back at financial year end. It was noted that all EDI funding needs to be ringfenced.

Equal/21-22/021 Updates from Other Trinity Bodies

There were no updates from other Trinity bodies.

Equal/21-22/022 Any Other Business

The following item was noted under Any Other Business:

- Ms Müller-Owens informed the committee that the first in-person Council took place for the Student’s Union. They previously had a non-EU and ASAP scholar pass. But they now have €30k which will be used to fund non-EU or ASAP scholars.

The Chair thanked all present and concluded the meeting.

END