



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

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Equality Committee
Minutes

Meeting of 2nd February 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, Ms R Gaynor, Ms S Maguire, Ms S Müller-Owens, Mr C O'Donnell, Ms K O'Toole-Brennan, Prof M Ruffini, Mr D Treanor, and Secretary / Equality Officer (Dr S O'Brien Green).

In Attendance: Ms S Cantwell (notetaker)

Apologies: Prof A Kahane, Dr B Ghosh.

Equal/21-22/031 Opening

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all.

Equal/21-22/32 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting of 13th December 2021 were approved without amendment.

Equal/21-22/033 Matters arising and Action Callover

- Sanitary products for the TCD community: The last Equality Committee minutes were brought to the most recent Board and the Chair raised the sanitary products period dignity project which was positively received. The interim COO will support this, and will liaise with the Students' Union. However, there may not be sufficient funding for College to fully adopt this project. It will be proposed that College provides funding to the Students' Union who would continue to run it. The Chair will bring this issue to the attention of Board and also to Heads of Schools Committee.
- Equality fund: The fund information guidelines have been reviewed and the equality fund is open for applications.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION/DECISION

Equal/21-22/034 Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy

The Chair noted that schools have objected to recent information sent around graduation ceremonies which spoke to the required dress code for men and women and have requested exceptions. The dress code required appears to be in opposition to elements of the Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy.

The Students' Union raised this issue with the Registrar and are working on making this dress code information gender neutral and non-prescriptive. The Senior Tutor, Registrar and Students' Union are also working on funding to assist with the purchase of formal dress if needed.

The Equality Officer's casework has highlighted numerous issues with this policy, in terms of implementation and staff training needs. For noting: Education and supports need to be put in place around this. She has also been informed that the current format of the policy is not in alignment with other Trinity policies.

A discussion took place around the updating of policies in general and how policies need to flow from an overarching Equality Policy. It was suggested that managers in all areas could be contacted to make them aware of this and other relevant policies and to ensure that their area is compliant, which would assist the Equality Officer in dealing with the numbers of personal cases in this complex area.

ACTION: The current Gender Identity and Gender Expression Policy will be updated to align with required College policy formats. Plans to review and update the current Equality Policy will be brought to Equality Committee. The Chair will bring this issue to the attention of Board to request a review of the policy and the resourcing to do this and ensure implementation and communication to the College community.

KEY UPDATES

Equal/21-22/035 Reflection on gender-based violence (GBV)

The Chair spoke about recent traumatic incidences of gender-based violence in Ireland and noted the potential high occurrence of it in certain areas, for example the School of Nursing and Midwifery, where there is a largely female population. Keeping awareness of this at a high level is important and discussion needs to be ongoing.

The AVPEDI acknowledged that this needs to be looked at, both at policy level and at a societal level. College is now reporting annually on progress around the HEA Consent Framework. The Minister of Further and Higher Education, Innovation and Science is open to investing in this area and the IUA and HEA will discuss the consent piece and look at levels of funding required across the sector. Young men also need to be involved in this conversation in combatting GBV, and it is key to support people in these conversations. Sports organisations will be helpful (FAI, League of Ireland). The IUA have suggested a discussion of GBV for International Womens' Day 8th March (via LinkedIn) and we could run some events in College around this.

IREC public sector duty also requires action around gender-based violence as it is a potential human rights issue

It was noted that in terms of addressing practical issues, lighting on campus should be improved. The Chair acknowledged the work being undertaken, the need for discussions to continue, and the need to identify particular issues such as safety on campus.

Equal/21-22/036 EDI Office and Athena SWAN

EDI Strategy

The AVPEDI presented a draft chart of the EDI landscape across College. The VP and Provost have approved a landscape mapping review of EDI in Trinity which will identify work happening and where gaps and silos are. The Academic Secretary has invited external reviewers with LERU/COIMBRA/UK university associations. Focus groups and interviews may also take place. A report will be brought back to this Committee which will enable us to plan and cost the work involved and look at resources required. The AVPEDI thanked all who have been engaging with the EDI office on this.

SALI Chair: In December's meeting with the HEA it was clarified that the next round will not be rolled out until funding is available to fill the posts that have already been deemed fundable. TCD expect to receive funding for one SALI post but there is no timeline for this yet.

Performance enhancement funding: Trinity did not receive funding in the most recent round. The HEA's funding model has changed because feedback from universities indicated that larger investments (5 awards of €1m each) would bring about more significant change. A new funding call has just gone live, with a similar approach to funding fewer, larger-scale projects. The deadline is end of March and the AVPEDI will meet with Michael Slevin from the Office of the VP to discuss this call and the application from Trinity.

Breastfeeding survey: The proposed survey is currently with the SNM Research Ethics Committee.

Advance HE: Sarah Fink will brief the University Athena SWAN Committee on 22nd March on the new Athena SWAN framework for Ireland. Representatives from this Committee will be welcome to attend. The EDI office will share details with all interested.

IHREC Public Sector Duty/universities framework: The IUA with UCD are developing tools for universities, with a workshop attended in December, and a meeting to take place in mid-February. It is expected that a draft framework for the sector will be available by the end of April.

Gender Equality Enhancement Fund (GEEF): Awards were made to two projects TCD are partnering on, both yet to commence. Colleagues need to be encouraged to lead on applications for these HEA funding calls.

Data collation and analysis: Data is being gathered for a report to the HEA on gender and ethnicity due next week. Encouraging completion of the HR Core Portal is needed to assist with data available in Trinity.

Audit of TCD portraits: Male/female breakdown of portraits is almost complete. Commissions for the College from women artists are being considered.

New AS charter/logos: The new charter was formally signed by the Provost and her letter of support will be published on the Equality website. New Athena SWAN logos are available and can now be used at College level.

School Submissions: Three schools submitted Athena SWAN applications this week. The Chair thanked all involved for their work on these. Two more schools are preparing for spring 2022. All applications from this point on must comply with the new framework. Specific attention will be given to sexual harassment and sexual violence in this new framework.

Risk registers: Work is ongoing on the departmental /EDI Office risk register and input to the College register.

Online course: A new online course, 'Let's Talk About Race in the Higher Education Sector' is now ready to go live. EDI receive requests for other types of training (e.g. LGBTQ+) but do not have a budget for this. There is still a gap for a Project, Training and Comms person in the EDI office.

Scholars at Risk: Dr Mohibbi is now in Ireland with his family. Trinity are only one of four universities in the world who have made this happen. The AVPEDI commended all for their efforts around this. A roadmap for other universities is being developed with NUI Maynooth.

In discussion it was noted that Global Engagement is missing from the EDI mapping exercise and it was agreed that they will be flagged on any documentation.

It was noted that the disjointed nature of EDI activities in College is partly due to how funding has been provided to the sector. It could be useful to estimate time spent on EDI efforts, to establish how much it is costing the university to absorb the extra activities required. Athena SWAN will require us to demonstrate how EDI work is resourced, recognised and rewarded.

Equal/21-22/037 Sub-Group Updates

Staff Disability Sub-Group

The Chair welcomed Dr Na Fu to the meeting to present an update on the Staff Disability Sub-Group. Dr Fu outlined the overall goals of the group: to promote visibility, raise awareness, and to encourage a culture and a working environment for people with a disability.

In terms of hires, minimum 117 new staff will be required by 2024 to align with NDA regulations and legislation. There has been progress on funding the activities of this Sub-Group with €8K received from HR/EDI and some funding from FHASS. The search for funding is ongoing. The Sub-Group will be taking part in the planned EDI assessment. They aim for a conference to showcase and disseminate their work in summer 2022.

The Chair noted that the Trinity Trust is currently seeking applications for funding. The Chair thanked Dr Fu for her update.

Equality Fund Subcommittee

The Chair updated the committee on the Equality Fund Subgroup.

Consultation took place with staff in FSD to address issues with reimbursements. The 2022 fund call was launched on January 12th and there has been a lot of interest. The Subcommittee will meet after the closing date on 11th February to assess and review applications.

AEMR Subcommittee

Meeting with EDI Office staff and Board members on the current format and data included in the AMER report took place on 13 January 2022. Progressing dataset access with TCD HR for Acting Equality Officer and dataset access with AR by EDI Data Analyst is ongoing. Planning that next iteration of AMER which will have more explicit reference to data gaps in TCD and will be more concise and include greater use of graphics.

Equal/21-22/038 Items For Noting

Ms O'Toole Brennan informed the group that two online events took place with NUI Maynooth and the Irish Prison Service around working with ex-offenders on prison education. The range of activities include outreach, financial supports, a review of admissions policies. This may be worth including in the mapping exercise. They are developing a toolkit and some

scholarships for students. TAP will meet with the Access service in Maynooth to look at where we can collaborate on this. Tools are available on the Unlock Potential website (Ms O'Toole Brennan will circulate to the group).

Equal/21-22/039 Any Other Business

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

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