

## EQUALITY FUND Terms of Reference

The creation of an Equality Fund was proposed by the Equality Committee and approved by Executive Officers and Board in 2007 (EQUAL/O6-07/26). The sum of €10,000 was made available annually to the Equality Committee for this purpose. The current terms of reference have been reviewed and approved by the Equality Committee (Eqal/07-08/21; Eqal/09-10/08 Eqal/10-11/06 and Eqal/12-13/10), last updated January 2020.

### Purpose

The Equality Fund aims to facilitate equality initiatives and to promote and celebrate diversity in all areas of Trinity life. The Fund is specially designed to facilitate innovative projects, one-off or pilot projects, and projects that might otherwise not receive funding.

The Equality Fund will be made available to staff and student applications on a competitive basis for a variety of equality projects within the university. "Staff" includes adjunct staff of the University.

Initiatives relating to 9 grounds of discrimination (gender, age, civil status, family status, race/ethnicity, membership of the traveller community, disability, sexual orientation and religion/belief) will be considered. Initiatives related to other diversity groups, if deemed relevant, may also be considered, with priority given to particular themes outlined in each round of funding.

A balance will be sought in the adjudication of funds to student initiatives and staff initiatives, and in the range of target groups and themes funded, where possible. Proposals from academic, administrative and support areas/departments and student groups will be considered eligible, as well as submissions by individual students or staff members. Collaborative projects are welcome.

### Limitations

The Fund will not be adjudicated to projects that should otherwise be centrally funded by Trinity, the Students' Unions, the CSC or DUCAC. This means that project proposals by University offices or student bodies must show that the proposed activity would go beyond their core or normal business. The Equality Fund will not normally fund usual academic activities such as conferences, course development or student assignments. Nor will it normally fund expenditure on research assistants, administrative/support staff, or project organisers' own time and effort spent on the project.

Costs associated with catering and refreshments will only be funded if they are essential to the project and only up to a pre-agreed limit determined by the Equality

Fund sub-committee. Projects must comply with the [Hospitality and Entertainment Policy](#) and the [Alcohol Policy](#). As a publicly-funded university, Trinity has historically taken a neutral stance on national referendums and as such the Equality Fund will not normally fund projects which explicitly promote one “side” of any referendum.

The Equality Fund will not normally be allocated to events which charge an admission fee of more than a nominal cost to secure bookings. Projects involving fundraising for charity will be considered on a case-by-case basis, noting that fundraising should not be the primary purpose of the project.

The Equality Fund is not awarded retrospectively, i.e. projects which have already been completed (or nearly completed) at the point of selection will not normally be funded. Nor is it awarded on a recurring basis, i.e. the same project will not normally be funded on more than one occasion. However, any group or individual can apply to the Equality Fund multiple times with different projects, in any one year or in consecutive years. The Equality Fund subcommittee reserves the right to refuse funding to a project on the basis that the project organiser (whether a group or an individual) has previously been allocated funding and failed to fulfil the terms and conditions of that funding allocation.

The Equality Fund will never be allocated to activities of the Equality Office, the Equality Committee or any subgroups of the Equality Committee. Individual Equality Committee members or their offices/organisations may apply to the Fund, and the Equality Fund subcommittee will judge the appropriateness of funding such applications on a case-by-case basis.

## Management

The Equality Fund will be managed by a sub-committee appointed by the Equality Committee.

### **Equality Fund Sub-Committee Composition:**

- The Equality Committee Chair (chair)
- A staff member of the Equality Committee
- A staff or student member of the Equality Committee
- A student member of the Equality Committee
- A nominee from the Financial Services Division
- The Equality Officer (secretary)

The Subcommittee will consider the applications submitted by individuals and departments by the appropriate deadline, and award the funds to selected proposals following the selection process outlined below. The Subcommittee will report to the Equality Committee on the management of the Fund. The Subcommittee is also responsible for monitoring the correct use of funding provided. This responsibility is delegated to the Equality Officer in relation to routine requests for project extensions no later than the end of the relevant financial year, and for requests for changes to planned expenditure of amounts of €200 or less.

Each project proposal must name a “project organiser” who will liaise with the Equality Officer in all matters relating to the project. The project organiser is responsible for:

- monitoring the project's budget and requesting reimbursements from the Equality Office
- implementing the project
- ensuring that the project is completed in accordance with the Equality Fund Terms of Reference and university policy

In case of any query or difficulty arising with a project, the project organiser should contact the Equality Officer immediately. The Equality Officer will assist project organisers with:

- processing reimbursements of project expenses
- publicising projects on Equality Office social media channels
- general advice and guidance

## Selection

The Fund will be awarded to events, creative works, services and other initiatives that aim to raise awareness on equality issues and promote diversity in Trinity, based on information provided in an application form which will be made available on the Equality Office website and publicised to all staff and students by email on the application opening date. Applications which are incomplete or do not display sufficient planning / attention to detail may be rejected.

A series of equality-related themes will be selected for each funding round and applications will be prioritised in relation to their relevance to said themes. These themes will ordinarily be based on Trinity's strategic goals for equality, as articulated in the Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and the Strategic Plan. The Sub-Committee may also select themes based on their own judgment of contemporary equality matters in the university.

Proposals will be judged with consideration to the following criteria:

1. Relevance to priority theme(s) / equality grounds (20%)
2. Expected benefit (impact) for Trinity (30%)
3. Expected benefit (impact) for wider society (10%)
4. Originality and creative approach (20%)
5. Value for money (20%)

The Equality Fund Sub-Committee will reserve the right only to award funds to those proposals which meet the stated criteria, noting that this could result in the full fund not being awarded at any particular time.

Feedback will be provided to all Equality Fund applicants on request.

## Administration of Funds

All payments from allocations under the Equality Fund must comply with College Procurement, Payroll, Invoice and Reimbursement guidelines; the statutory legal requirements governing public bodies as prescribed by the Revenue Commissioners; and any additional conditions specified by the Equality Fund Sub-Committee.

Details on invoice payment and reimbursement procedures can be found on the Equality Office website: <http://www.tcd.ie/equality/projects/equality-fund/project-organiser/>. The Equality Officer will act as the liaison with Fund recipients, administering the funding payments. Project organisers should be aware that processing each reimbursement may take some time.

€10,000 will be adjudicated annually in one instalment, during Michaelmas term. Projects must be completed by 30<sup>th</sup> June of the same academic year, except in exceptional circumstances where an extension has been granted by the Equality Fund Sub-Committee, and all project payments must be fully processed by 30 September (i.e. the end of Trinity's financial year). Where the annual Equality Fund allocation is not fully spent it will normally carry forward and be allocated in the next year in addition to the €10,000 stipulated.

Successful project recipients are required to sign an acceptance letter outlining the conditions for use of Equality Fund monies and to sign their agreement to these Terms of Reference. All recipients must complete the Feedback Form provided upon completion of the project and submit it, together with any other specified documentation (such as photographs or video from an event), to the Equality Officer. Project organisers will also be requested to provide updates on their project's progress from time to time, and they must notify the Equality Office immediately of any changes to their project.

Failure to fulfil any of these requirements may entail the loss of the funding award. The Equality Fund also reserves the right to re-claim the funding should the project proposed not take place as described in the application form.