



The Terms of Reference of the Trinity LGBT+ Staff Network

Name

This group is named the ‘Trinity LGBTIQ+ Staff Network’ or ‘the Network’ in brief.

Remit

This document uses the identifiers ‘LGBTIQ+’ and ‘queer’ to refer to individuals and communities who identify differently than heterosexual and cisgender’. The Network uses these identifiers to ensure the broadest communication of its aims and to draw on the wider contemporary communities and civil movements in this space for our members.

[Appendix 1](#) provides more detail on our approach to terminology and the remit for our activities.

This document use ‘Trinity’ to refer in brief to Trinity College Dublin, the University of Dublin, insofar as it functions in whole or in part as the primary employer, place of work, and professional and personal community for our members.

This document use “Members” to refer in brief to members of the Network’s mailing list whose primary purpose is for LGBTIQ+ staff members of Trinity and those who support our work.

This document uses ‘Committee’ to refer to members who are involved in the volunteer organising committee of the Network



Purpose

The purpose of the Network is to be a collaborative and empowering community for the LGBTIQ+ staff of Trinity and to act as an active and bold leader in creating, fostering, and representing an inclusive university experience for LGBTIQ+ people.

Principles

The Network is committed to acting on these following principles and driving them in all facets of its work:

- Equity, inclusion, and belonging are essential and immutable elements of the Trinity's purpose as an institution
- LGBTIQ+ people are an intrinsic part of society who individually and collectively add distinctive experiences to society and the Trinity community
- It advances societal good to advocate for the wellbeing, inclusion, and opportunity of LGBTIQ+ people
- LGBTIQ+ people are affected directly and indirectly by structural inequities which can present as discrimination and marginalization. As an equity-deserving community, LGBTIQ+ people must have access to the appropriate support and resources to overcome these inequities
- As identity is fluid and evolving, an intersectional approach is essential to ensure effective and compassionate representation of our people. All identities and experiences under the LGBTIQ+ umbrella should be able to thrive in our spaces
- LGBTIQ+ identities are not homogenous and there is a plurality of perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences for each person and identity within our community
- The Network advocates for LGBTIQ+ people and their allies to act bravely in solidarity with other marginalised communities and identities, for the collective social good
- The work of the Network integrates with and contributes to Trinity's success



Objectives

The objectives of the Network are:

- To create opportunities for our members to connect inside and outside of Trinity for social and professional peer support
- To enable a safe, inclusive, and bravely progressive community for our members
- To advocate for Trinity management at all levels to prioritize LGBTIQ+ people in the development and implementation of all relevant policy, practice, and research
- To act collectively with fairness, integrity, and empathy
- To actively foster a Network community which is diverse and representative
- To act as a leader on queer activity to foster progress within the university and the sector
- To create opportunities for members to connect with people and activities within Trinity and in wider society which contribute to the development of the queer community
- To maintain and grow the visibility of LGBTIQ+ people and their diverse, unique experiences in Trinity
- To act as an advocate and collective voice to represent the needs of LGBTIQ+ people in Trinity, and act as a critical friend to the university's efforts in this regard
- To provide expertise and guidance to groups internal and external to Trinity who are interested in connecting on LGBTIQ+ issues
- To act as a safe, supportive, and informed first point of contact for LGBTIQ+ staff on any issues related to their experience as a member of the community
- To drive awareness in Trinity of important issues which impact LGBTIQ+ people
- To respect and protect the human rights, dignity, and privacy of all our people
- To advocate for and act in solidarity with other communities, in particular those experiencing multiple marginalization. This includes but is not limited to, queer people of colour, transgender and non-binary people, and disabled queer people



The Network operates these key functions in pursuit of those objectives:

- Engaging in Trinity's Equity, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion functions and community of practice
- Advising Trinity staff and functional areas on LGBTIQ+-related policy and practice
- Organising events and activities which will be of interest and benefit to its members, and the wider Trinity community
- Developing research links for LGBTIQ+ research and/or researchers
- Collaborating with other affinity networks within and without the university, including student groups and student-staff partnerships
- Leading the university is the recognition of significant observances for the community

Membership

- General membership of the Network is open to all current LGBTIQ+ staff of Trinity. 'Staff' status is self-defined by members and is interpreted broadly to include those who consider themselves partially or fully staff, including but not limited to: adjunct lecturers, postgraduate researchers, and occasional staff such as casual staff who may also be students of the university. Our membership specifically and actively includes academic, professional, managerial, technical and support staff
- General membership is also open to staff of Trinity who do not identify as part of the LGBTIQ+ community and wish to act as allies to support the Network's activities and objectives
- Associate membership of the Network will be open to former staff, staff of other institutions, and any other persons deemed appropriate by the Committee who do not satisfy the criteria for general membership.
- In becoming a member of the Network, members will be deemed as having accepted the Network's [Code of Conduct](#).
- Membership of the Network is held in strict and ongoing privacy, in addition to prevailing College Data Protection and privacy regulations. Membership information is available only to the organising committee and is used solely for



the communication purpose for which it was provided. No identifying data will be shared with other parties, including departments of the university, without explicit consent from the member.

Membership of the Network continues on an ongoing basis and will cease when:

- The staff member requests to be removed from the membership
- The staff member is deemed to no longer be employed by Trinity
- The staff member is deemed to have their membership cancelled by the organising committee for sufficient reason, which will in most cases derive from the Network's [Code of Conduct](#)

Organising and Collaboration

'The Network' is the collective grouping of all members who are interested in advancing and contributing to the Network's objectives. Members are invited at all times to incorporate this commitment in their day-to-day work and suggest ideas for the Network's advancement.

The Network is led by an organising Committee which is in place to drive the principles and key functions of the Network.

The Network will aim to convene the Committee with Members that will represent the diversity of wider society, with particular emphasis on equity-deserving experiences and identities named in the protected grounds of the Irish Equal Status Acts. This includes but is not limited to, varied backgrounds in terms of gender, race and ethnic identity, disability, and socio-economic status. The Network will also aim for the Committee to represent the spread of professional backgrounds in Trinity, including academic, professional, technical and support staff.

The Committee is a non-hierarchical group whose members agree to shared responsibility to enable the aims of the Network. In addition to these shared



responsibilities, committee members may also undertake specific projects or roles, such as are requested by the committee or the Co-Chairs of the Committee.

In accordance with the purpose and principles of the Network, the Co-Chair roles and the majority of the Committee roles must be held by current staff members of Trinity who identify within the LGBTIQ+ community.

Formal relationship with Trinity and related groups

The Network is an independent representative group which is organized voluntarily by and for LGBTIQ+ staff of the university. In accordance with its purpose and principles, the Network aims to work collegiately within Trinity to have meaningful impact on LGBTIQ+ issues.

To facilitate this, the Network holds these formal relationships within Trinity as an institution:

- The Network works with the Office of the Associate Vice-Provost for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI Office) to advance LGBTIQ+ issues.
- The Network is a staff association recognised by the university and listed in the College Calendar.
- The Network works with other areas of Trinity who have an impact on LGBTIQ+ issues, such as Human Resources.
- The Network offers peer expertise to other staff associations and groups.
- The Network will present to the EDI Sub-Committee of Trinity on request, and a minimum of once per year.
- The Network will work with the EDI Office and other relevant parties to coordinate the annual Pride at Trinity celebrations.

The Network also values its ongoing partnership with Q Soc, the student LGBTIQ+ society, building on a shared legacy of LGBTIQ+ advocacy at the university.



In accordance, the Network formally expects these commitments from Trinity:

- The Network is recognised as the representative staff group on campus for LGBTIQ+ issues.
- The Network's terms of reference will be noted in the minutes of the EDI Sub-Committee of Board.
- The Network will be supported by the EDI Office with appropriate professional expertise and collaboration where possible.
- The Network will be included in relevant university activity, such as discussions of policy which impacts LGBTIQ+ staff, staff induction, and LGBTIQ+ related events and celebrations.
- Trinity will continue to support the Network in its aims through access to email, communications channels, web facilities, and standard room bookings.
- Trinity will support the Network when it collaborates with external parties.
- Trinity will enable the activities of the Network to be recognised as contributing to the university's strategic aims where appropriate, including as a valid activity for progression and recognition purposes.

The Committee

The organising committee consists of voluntary, unpaid roles which staff members adopt in addition to their core role with the university. As a voluntary committee, its guiding principle is to act dynamically and with shared work and responsibility amongst its members.

The intended committee membership is:

- 2 Co-Chairs
- 1 Secretary
- 2 Events Leads
- 2 Communications Leads



- 3 or more general Committee Members

The committee can also, when it deems it necessary, co-opt members or invite guest contributors to address specific areas of expertise or redress imbalances in its composition, such as explicitly seeking involvement from unrepresented genders or racialised experiences.

Committee members are expected to communicate regularly and supportively with their colleagues. In the event that a committee member is absent from Network business for an extended period then they may be deemed by the Committee to have stepped down from their role.

Committee Member responsibilities

Committee Members act as representatives of the Network and are expected to:

- Attend and contribute to committee meetings and committee business.
- Attend and contribute to Network events.
- Promote the Network within the University and externally.
- Represent the members of the Network in the University and advocate for their interests.
- Understand the aims and activities of the Network and support all groups of staff to be appropriately included in events.
- Foster and act on the purpose, principles, and objectives of these Terms of Reference.
- Act with respect, confidentiality, and understanding.
- Understand and communicate relevant university business.
- Complete any training which may be recommended from time to time, including the EDI training provided by the EDI Office.

Specific committee roles have other responsibilities in addition to those listed above:



Co-Chair

- Act with responsibility for overseeing and driving the general operation of the Network.
- Act with responsibility for safeguarding the principles and ethos of the Network.
- Chair all committee meetings unless delegated to another committee member.
- Represent the Network in all dealings with the University unless delegated to another committee member.
- Directly oversee all Network projects and activities unless delegated to another committee member.
- Be responsible for all finances of the Network, and have final say on all matters of sponsorship and expenditure while remaining conscious of the consensus of the Committee and the Network.
- Be the primary designated person responsible for handling sensitive and confidential matters which come to the Network, including referral to appropriate third-party services.

Secretary

- Prepare and record the agenda of all meetings of the Network.
- Take and record the minutes of all meetings of the Network.
- Promptly send out documentation from all meetings to relevant parties, ideally within 3 days of the meeting date.
- Send regular communications to members regarding the Network's activities.
- Bear responsibility for maintaining a membership list that is up-to-date and ensure that it is kept confidential, allowing only committee members to see it in the execution of their duties.



Events Lead

- Coordinate the planning and promoting of Network events.
- Coordinate any relevant room bookings, and relationships with relevant event stakeholders and third parties.
- Promote (prior to and during event) the events and drive attendance from Network members.

Communications Lead

- Be responsible for all facets of effective engagement with the Network membership through the Network website and social media.
- Coordinating the Network's website presence and social media accounts.
- Organise and oversee the generation and distribution of LGBTQ+ related content for the Network's website, social media, and other relevant communication avenues, including in-person.
- Collaborate with Trinity Communications, the Trinity Social media group, and any other relevant colleagues to promote our communications.

Committee Member Recruitment

- Committee member positions will normally be filled at the Annual General Meeting. Where positions are deemed by the Committee as necessary to fill during the year, they will be co-opted via an open and transparent selection process recorded in the Committee minutes.
- If a committee position becomes vacant during the year, this will be advertised to members who will be invited to apply to be co-opted.
- Available positions must be advertised in a manner which will seek visibility to all eligible staff, including those who do not have desk-based roles and those who might often be underrepresented in committees of this nature.



- Interested parties will normally be asked to give a brief overview of why they're interested and confirm to the chair that they will uphold the duties of the committee member.
- Committee participation is intended to be open to as many people as wish to participate. If a situation arises where there is a limit to this, e.g. multiple nominees for a Co-Chair role, then the Network will discuss with present members how to equitably resolve the situation.

Committee Meetings

- The Committee shall meet at least monthly at an agreed date and time.
- All meetings of the committee shall be open for any Member of the Network to attend if requested in advance. The Committee may deem certain aspects of the meeting as confidential and held in private.
- Attendance at committee meetings is expected for all committee members. Apologies for inability to attend must be sent to the Secretary no later than three hours before the meeting is scheduled to begin.
- Accurate minutes of the meeting shall be kept and distributed in a timely manner.

Finances

- The Co-Chairs are responsible for the financial management of the Network. All financial transactions in respect of the Network must be processed in line with the University's financial policies and procedures and documentation recorded in the Network's archives.
- Any financial transactions in respect of Network funds must be materially necessary to the objectives of the Network.
- By mutual agreement, the Network's finances will be managed with the support of the EDI Office.



The Annual General Meeting

- Notice of no less than one week must be given to members ahead of either and Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) or the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- As a small voluntary organisation, the quorum for the AGM will be 10% of the current membership, 10 people, or or the majority of the Committee, whichever is smaller
- The Agenda for the AGM will include:
 - A report from the Co-Chairs on the Network since the previous meeting (Overall and Financial).
 - A call for nominations to the next iteration of the committee.
 - Ratification of any changes to the Terms of Reference during the year.
 - Any Other Business raised by Network members.

Amendments to the Terms of Reference

- Amendments to the Terms of Reference shall be discussed at the AGM of the Network and approved by majority vote. From time to time, amendments may be deemed necessary during the course of the year, in which case they will be shared with the membership for discussion and agreed by majority vote of the organising committee. Interim amendments of this nature will be presented for a confirmation vote at the AGM.
- An EGM can be called if deemed necessary by the Committee or as requested by a group of Network members on a matter of importance to the Network.

Schedule for review and approval

This Terms of Reference is reviewed as needed by the organising committee and at least annually, in advance of the Annual General Meeting



Appendices

These appendices include additional information on agreed practice within the Network for clarity. These may be amended throughout the year as needed by the Organising Committee through normal consultation processes.

Terminology and best practice

The Network recognizes that personal identity is a core facet of how people understand themselves and how communities form, grow, and interact. Terminology is a central tool in enabling individuals and groups to communicate, challenge, and thrive, particularly those whose identities are marginalised in society, fluid, or otherwise differ from the mainstream.

The Network Committee in pursuit of its objectives utilises a range of terminology and best practice related to this community to communicate its work, drawing on the personal experience and professional expertise of our members. In doing so we recognise that not all of our members may identify with or be in agreement with the perspectives presented, in whole or in part, and we acknowledge that plurality of opinion and healthy discourse as an important part of our community.

Complaints Process

Any Network member is entitled to raise an issue, concern, or complaint regarding the Network with the Committee.

This can be submitted by email to LGBTStaff@tcd.ie or to the Co-Chairs of the Network directly. The committee commits to responding to any issues raised promptly and transparently. Network members may also, if they prefer, request to discuss an issue in person, or with another committee member. Trinity community members are at all times entitled to avail of the general issue resolution and complaints procedures managed centrally by the university.



Code of Conduct, Safety, and Accountable Spaces

The fundamental principles of the Network's Code of Conduct are derived from the university's [Dignity and Respect Policy, Equality Policy, and other applicable policies](#).

The Network affirms its commitment at all times to adhere to the Trinity Dignity, Respect, and Consent Policy and related policies in the conduct of its activities.

Additionally, the Network makes further commitment to creating accountable spaces for our activities. It is understood that membership in the society constitutes an acceptance of the validity of the Code of Conduct and an intention to support and abide by its tenets.

The LGBTIQ+ Staff Network activities are intended to be non-judgmental and trustworthy spaces for LGBTIQ+ people. There is no expectation that you share why you have joined the LGBTIQ+ staff mailing list, have attended an LGBTIQ+ event or meeting, or are interested in our activities. You may contribute fully or not at all at meetings, through the mailing list and/or on social media. However, all contributions and interactions at Network meetings, on social media and via emails should be respectful of other members, especially when contrasting opposing views are held. If you choose to actively participate in the meetings, through the mailing list and/or on social media, you must be aware that your identity and engagement with the Network will be visible to others.

To a higher standard, there is a zero-tolerance approach within the Network for discrimination or prejudice towards another member based on minoritized/marginalized characteristics or identities (e.g., transphobia, racism, ableism, sexism etc.). Where a breach of conduct is alleged, members are encouraged to consider the options available to them in the university's [informal and formal grievance procedures](#). Members may choose to, but are not obligated, to notify the Network Committee of any specific concerns or incidents that have arisen in relation to Network members and/or activities if they are relevant to the Network. Any issues raised will be held confidentially within the limits of applicable College policy. The Network Committee may choose to refer or



confer on the issue with colleagues in the EDI Office and or the Dignity, Respect, and Consent Office.

Accountable Spaces

Network activities are intended to be welcoming, accountable spaces where no one will feel uncomfortable or in danger. The committee recognizes that to facilitate this can in certain situations require indirect or direct intervention to respond to challenging or unexpected situations arising at events. A level of discretion is expected at any Network activity, and attendees should be enabled to participate to the level of their comfort. Certain events or activities may be more suitable for different audiences, such as closed conversations for LGBTIQ+ only, and the Network aims to clearly communicate this to attendees in advance.

Committee Position on Advocacy and Collective Statements

The committee recognizes that their primary commitment is to foster a just and inclusive society for LGBTIQ+ people to the highest possible degree. We further recognise that LGBTIQ+ rights, safety, and experience are inextricably linked with human rights and the wellbeing of all people.

The committee also recognises that it holds a responsibility to advocate as a representative group in the tradition of higher education, and as part of the legacy of queer rights that is intertwined with Trinity.

The committee acknowledges that a society is composed of individuals and that the wellbeing of individuals within our society must be paramount. The committee further acknowledges that queer people are a minority within society at large and are subject to all the attendant disadvantages of representation, visibility and safety that implies.



The committee further acknowledges that queer people are subject to passive & active discrimination within society, both those uniquely instigated by their queer identity and also external disadvantages that are aggravated by their queer identity. These difficulties include, but are not limited to: Social exclusion and stigma, verbal abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, psychological abuse, the development of addictions such as alcoholism, drug addiction, mental health issues such as paranoia, depression, anxiety, self-harm, suicidal ideation et al.

In consideration of these facts, the committee undertakes that it is their responsibility as representatives of this community to develop and adhere to a policy of actions and behaviours that seeks to alleviate these difficulties, ameliorate the conditions under which queer individuals and communities live and advocate for a positive and constructive environment for all people.

The committee further undertakes that it is their individual and collective duty as compassionate people to implement this ethos ethically, thoroughly and to the best of their ability both within the context of Network events and activities, with the understanding that the most compassionate actions must at times happen as it occurs in lecture halls, offices, and public spaces.

Within the ambit of that commitment, the Committee has adopted the following approach to advocacy and collective statements:

- Any member can raise an issue with the committee that they believe should be responded to or acted on collectively
- Any committee member can raise an issue in a similar manner in a committee meeting and/or to the Co-Chairs of the Network
- The committee will deliberate whether they will act collectively on the issue raised which must be agreed by majority vote



- The appropriate response will vary based on the issue at hand, but will commonly include the following options:
 - A direct intervention or representation made by the Co-Chairs or a designated committee member
 - A collective statement on behalf of the Network
 - A collective statement on behalf of the organising Committee of the Network
 - A collective statement on behalf of individually undersigned Network members

Social Media, Online Safety, and Security

The fundamental principles of the Network's Code of Conduct are derived from the university's [Social Media Policy, and other applicable policies](#). The Network affirms its commitment at all times to adhere to these policies in the conduct of its activities.

The committee has collective responsibility for the proper use of any communications platforms utilised by the Network. The Network may maintain an online presence via online platforms as a tool pursuant to the overall aims and objectives of the organisation. Understanding the scope of online engagement may progress and change online platform(s) may include but are not limited to:

- Social Media (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn)
- Messaging & Communications (e.g., WhatsApp, Signal, Messenger)
- Video (e.g., Youtube, Vimeo)
- Images (e.g., Instagram, Flickr)
- Web-Publishing (e.g., WordPress, Wix, Issuu)
- Email (e.g., Gmail, Mailchimp)
- Cloud-Based Platforms (e.g., G-Suite, One Drive, DropBox)
- Management Platforms (e.g., Buffer, Zoho, Mailchimp, Sprout)



It may be in the organisation's interest to establish a new account on a particular platform. This must be agreed on by a majority of the committee before doing so. Should the need to close an online account arise, this must be agreed upon by a majority of the committee and data pertaining to this account downloaded (where possible) and retained by the organisation.

Posting Guidelines

The Network will make all reasonable efforts to inform event attendees if photos, videos, or other content from Network activities is intended to be disseminated more widely. Any attendee can request that content be removed if they are not willing to be included.

Any comments or content that are considered to breach an individual's privacy will also be removed.

Security and Account Management

The Co-Chairs have responsibility for maintaining access to all online platforms, access can be delegated to specific committee members as needed to facilitate the organisations work.

Passwords must remain confidential, conform to security recommendations, and be stored in a secure place. Password access to all online accounts will be updated within the week following the election of a new committee at the Annual General Meeting each year.

Data and Confidentiality

The fundamental principles of the Network's Code of Conduct are derived from the university's [Data Protection and other applicable policies](#). The Network affirms its commitment at all times to adhere to these policies in the conduct of its activities.



Through the nature of the Network's engagement with and support of LGBTIQ+ community, our online presence presents one of the first port of calls for engagement or support. In this light, it is imperative that confidentiality is upheld while engaging with individuals, particularly in the disclosure of personal details relevant to an individual's query. The Network commits to the highest standard of confidentiality and sensitivity in its work and its engagement with member information.