



Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion Policy

Our Mission

Cultural traditions should be an enriching part of the lives of Irish people everywhere, particularly our young people; they should be a living, highly visible and vibrant part of society; they should be easily accessible to all; and their unique social, cultural and economic benefits should be fully realised by communities and individuals in Ireland and in Irish communities abroad.

CCÉ aims to provide an inclusive environment which promotes equality and values diversity. We are committed to eliminating unlawful discrimination of all members and to develop their full potential regardless of gender, marital status, family status, race, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, disability, age or member of the Travelling Community. All employees and appointed roles whether they are paid or voluntary who act on behalf of CCÉ are required to comply with this policy.

Relevant Legislation/References/Resources

- Equal Status Acts 2000 – 2015
- Employment Equality Acts 1998 – 2015
- Disability Act 2015
- Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014
- www.genderequality.ie
- gov.ie – Gender Equality
- EIGE – Online glossary of gender mainstreaming concepts and definitions
Council of Europe gender equality glossary
- Department of Children, Equality, Disability,
- Integration and Youth National Strategy for Women and Girls 2017-2021
- National Women’s Council of Ireland
- Bystander Intervention Programme, UCC

The purpose of this Policy is to outline CCÉ’s commitment to equality and inclusion in all aspects of the organisation with regards to employment, education and service provision. The aim is for our organisation to be truly representative of all sections of society and our members, and for each employee/volunteer to feel respected and able to give their best.

Our Values

- **Diverse:** we are all-embracing of everyone regardless of race, religion, or ability.
- **Open & Honest:** we ensure our services are underpinned by fairness, in recognition of the dignity and humanity of each person, free from harassment, anti-sectarian and anti-racist.
- **Empower:** we believe in the intrinsic value of every person, and we aim to further the dignity of all associated with our movement.

- **Inspire:** we want each individual to avail of opportunities for self-expression in the pursuit of traditional music, song, dance and language.
- **Inclusive:** we promote equal opportunity for all regardless of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious belief or lack thereof, race, ethnicity or nationality

The policy's purpose is to:

- Provide equality, fairness and respect for all in our employment or appointments, whether temporary, part-time, full-time or as a volunteer
- Not unlawfully discriminate because of the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race (including colour, nationality, and ethnic or national origin), religion or belief, sex (gender) and sexual orientation
- Oppose and avoid all forms of unlawful discrimination. This includes in pay and benefits, terms and conditions of employment, dealing with grievances and discipline, and selection for employment, appointment, promotion, training or other developmental opportunities

The organisation commits to:

- Encourage equality and diversity in all levels of the organisation including best practice in the workplace.
- Ensure that staff and volunteers undergo appropriate equality training for their role.
- Create a working environment free of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, promoting dignity and respect for all, and where individual differences and the contributions of all are recognised and valued. This commitment includes training staff and volunteers about their rights and responsibilities under the equality, diversity and inclusion policy, which require staff and volunteers to help the organisation provide equal opportunities in employment, and prevent bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. All staff and volunteers should understand they can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination, in the course of their employment or appointment, against fellow employees, volunteers, suppliers and the public.
- Take seriously complaints of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination by fellow employees, volunteers, members, suppliers, visitors, the public and any others in the course of the organisations work activities. Such complaints will be dealt with under the organisations *Managing Conflict Policy* and appropriate action will be taken. Particularly serious complaints could amount to gross misconduct and lead to dismissal without notice. Further, sexual harassment may amount to both an employment rights matter and a criminal matter.
- Making opportunities for training, development and progress available to all staff and volunteers, who will be helped and encouraged to develop their full potential, so their talents and resources can be fully utilised to maximise the efficiency of the organisation.
- Ensuring that both existing staff and those seeking employment with CCÉ, are treated fairly and that individuals are judged solely on merit and by work reference to their skills, abilities, qualifications, aptitude and potential (apart from in any necessary and limited exemptions and exceptions allowed under the Law)
- Ensuring that all contractors and service providers operating on behalf CCÉ are aware of this policy and are expected to adhere it.

- Ensuring all staff have equal access to facilities and that adjustments to working practices are considered wherever reasonably possible in order to accommodate a more diverse and inclusive work environment.
- Review employment practices and procedures when necessary to ensure fairness, and also update them and the policy to take account of changes in the law.
- Increasing awareness of the make-up of the workforce, either staff and volunteer, regarding information such as age, gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, religion or belief, and disability in encouraging equality and diversity, and in meeting the aims and commitments set out in this policy.
- Regularly monitoring assessing how the this policy is working in practice and to review it annually.

All units of CCÉ have a responsibility to:

- Set a good example by treating all persons with dignity and respect.
- Correct unacceptable behaviour.
- Ensure staff and volunteers know how to report discrimination, bullying and harassment. Ensure that reporting incidents does not result in victimisation.
- Deal with complaints fairly, thoroughly, quickly and confidentially.
- Ensure that due consideration is given to equality, diversity and inclusion within the scope of influence of a person's role.

Monitoring and Review

Comhaltas has declared its commitment to establishing, developing, implementing and reviewing a policy of equality of opportunity. The Cothromaíocht team will report on the overall implementation of this policy. The policy will be reviewed on a yearly basis or if there are any legal developments that warrant a more frequent review.. This review will be implemented by the Cothromaíocht team.

Effective record keeping and monitoring, and acting on information gathered, are essential in order to measure effectiveness and plan progress.

This policy shall operate in conjunction with all CCÉ policies and in accordance with the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion within the law and which is preserved and protected by the CCÉ ethos and governance framework.

Please also note other relevant Comhaltas Publications which can be viewed on www.comhaltas.ie;

- Bullying & Harassment Prevention Policy
- Child Protection
- Child Protection Policy
- Cothromaíocht
- Data Protection
- Gender-Mainstreaming Strategy
- Positive Working And Learning Environment
- Equality, Diversity, Inclusion
- GDPR
- Positive Learning and Work Environment
- Safeguarding

Cothromaíocht

Respect; Equality; Opportunity, offers an insight into the scale and scope of CCÉ's activities and projects. It details statistically Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann's status in relation to gender balance throughout the organisation and outlines our intended delivery of a range of training and mentoring supports and resources at all levels, designed to further advance a positive and lasting culture of respect and dignity throughout Comhaltas and the overall Irish cultural sector. Throughout its 70 years in existence Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann has remained committed to the ideals of providing appropriate opportunities for young people and all those who engage with the Irish cultural traditions, providing opportunities for self-expression and enabling them to reach their full potential.

Comhaltas' Statement Nov 2021

On the Invitation to attend the Joint Committee on Tourism, Culture, Arts, Sports and Media to discuss "A safe and respectful working environment in the arts", Comhaltas published the following statement.

Opening statement: Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann welcomes the 'Speak Up; A Call for Change' initiative by Minister Catherine Martin T.D. and congratulates The Minister, the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, the Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, and all involved in its development. It is a timely report, fostering a safer and more respectful environment for the arts. During the past year Comhaltas re-stated and widely distributed, internally and externally, its long-standing mission and ethos statement:

Who We Are:

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann's Vision, Values, Mission and Ethos are guided by many principles:

- The essence of our movement as we interpret it, is that it is all embracing and inclusive of everyone regardless of race, religion or ability.
- The core values of our services have always been underpinned by honesty, openness, fairness, the dignity of each person, free from harassment, anti-sectarian and anti-racist.
- We believe in the intrinsic value of every person and we aim to further the dignity of all associated with our movement.
- We want each individual to avail of opportunities for self-expression in the pursuit of Irish traditional music, song, dance and language.
- We promote inclusivity, equal opportunity for all regardless of gender, marital status, sexual orientation, age, disability, religious belief, or lack thereof, race, ethnicity or nationality.

As a community, participation-based intergenerational movement Comhaltas supports the advancement of these values across the overall culture and arts sector and the elimination of any damaging behaviour. Comhaltas is a voluntary organisation with 450 Branches in Ireland and 21 countries dedicated to the preservation, promotion and development of the Irish cultural traditions delivering services throughout the island of Ireland, the Irish diaspora and across the globe.

Comhaltas' 19 cultural centres support its voluntary structures which collectively provide services to 3 million people annually. As a multi-faceted organisation Comhaltas is widely

acknowledged for its unparalleled contribution to the vibrancy of Irish traditional music today, especially amongst young people, throughout Ireland and among the Irish Diaspora;

this has largely been achieved through its holistic educational programme. The various strands of its education programme are facilitated and delivered through its democratic structures as are all Comhaltas events, at every level up to and including Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann which consistently attracts c. 500,000 people.

SAFE TO CREATE – Dignity in the Workplace & The Code of Behaviour

Following the publication of the SPEAK UP: A Call for Change report (Oct 2021), which shows harmful behaviour in the arts sector, a standard Code of Behaviour was developed and adopted across the arts and creative sectors so that all those working, whether voluntary or not, are clear as to their rights and obligations.

Comhaltas signed the Code of Behaviour in December 2022. We pledge to create a safe, inclusive, respectful workplace where artists and arts workers can thrive, free from all forms of harassment, discrimination, bullying and violence.

WE CONFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TO:

- Act in an ethical manner as a business and act with integrity and ethically as an employer
- Commit fully to safe and respectful workspaces with zero tolerance for damaging behaviour
- Abide by all Health and Safety, Equality, Diversity and Employment legislation and comply with all relevant regulations
- Create and implement best practice around codes of practice, policies and procedures for safe workspaces ensuring a clear reporting system, timely investigation which identifies acts of wrongdoing and offers support, action, resolutions, monitoring, and accountability
- Have policies and procedures in place to ensure a safe workplace including: a Dignity at Work protocol, as well as grievance, and disciplinary procedures (see Safe to Create Templates)
- Ensure work environments support the creative process and promote mutual respect from everyone involved
- Commit to the implementation of the code with all employees no matter what their employment status and attach the code to all contracts and letters of agreement
- Avail of Safe to Create free online training for employees irrespective of the nature of the employment on: Tackling Bullying and Harassment at Work, Addressing Unconscious Bias and Bystander Training
- Display the Code of Conduct and all anti-harassment policies prominently in all workspaces
- Promote the Code within and outside our communities establishing a relationship of mutual trust with business partners and stakeholders

Definitions

Bullying

Workplace bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical, or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another, or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment. An isolated incident of this behaviour is not considered to be bullying.

Bullying is conduct which occurs on more than one occasion and which is offensive to a reasonable person. Many types of conduct and actions can constitute bullying with some being less obvious than others.

Bullying can consist of persistent offensive, abusive, intimidating, malicious, or insulting behaviour, or abuse of power carried out by an employee, or group of employees, either directly or indirectly, or online, which makes the recipient feel upset, threatened, humiliated, or vulnerable.

Harassment

Harassment on the grounds of gender, marital status, family status, race, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, membership of the Travelling Community, is defined as any unwanted conduct which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for the person. Unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures, or other material.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any form of unwanted verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature which has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment for the person. This conduct is not limited by the gender(s) of the complainant and the alleged perpetrator(s). The unwanted conduct may consist of acts, requests, spoken words, gestures, physical contact, or the production, display or circulation of written words, pictures, or other material.

Sexual Assault

Sexual assault is any sexual act that a person did not consent to or was forced into against their will. This includes rape. Sexual assault, and being made to fear immediate assault, is a criminal offence.

Victimisation

In accordance with the Equality Acts, victimisation occurs where dismissal or other adverse treatment of an employee/worker occurs as a reaction to:

- A complaint of discrimination made by the employee/ worker
- Any proceedings by a complainant
- An employee/worker having represented or otherwise supported a complainant
- An employee/worker having been a witness in any proceedings under the Equality Acts or the Equal Status Act (2000–2008)
- An employee/worker having given notice of intention to do any of the above any victimisation of, or retaliation by, another employee/ worker against a complainant, an employee/worker supporting a complainant, or a worker who gives evidence regarding an allegation of bullying, harassment, or sexual harassment, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

If you are affected by the contents of this document please find details of organisations you can contact below:

Minding Creative Minds – ROI: 1800 814244, NI: 0800 0903677

Rape Crisis Centre – 1800 778888

Samaritans – 116123

Other Website Resources

Irish Networks Against Racism (INAR)

Irish Traveller Movement (ITM)

Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)

www.belongto.org

Cara - Friend

The Rainbow Project

Document History

Title	DEI Policy	Owner	Cothromaíocht Committee
Approved By	Buanchoiste	Approval Date	8 th March 2024
Date of this revision		Revision Date	7 th March 2025

Consultation History

Revision Number	Consultation Date	Name of Parties in Consultation	Summary of Changes
0.1	December 2023	Ardrunaí, National PRO and Ardchláráitheoir	

Approval

This document requires the following approvals:

Name	Title	Date
Oversight Committee	Cothromaíocht Committee	16 th February 2024
Standing Committee	Buanchoiste	8 th March 2024
Governing Body (for noting only)	ArdChomhairle	9 th March 2024

This policy shall be reviewed regularly by the Cothromaíocht Committee considering any legislative or other relevant developments.

Signed: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

Date for review: _____
