



Diversity & Inclusiveness Policy

Introduction

Edmund Rice Foundation Australia's (ERFA) Diversity & Inclusiveness Policy is grounded in ERFA's vision for a just and peaceful world where the dignity and rights of all are respected, and ERFA's commitment to being inclusive and offering support in a spirit of human solidarity regardless of race, culture, gender, health status and religious or political beliefs.

ERFA believes that sustainable development and human rights are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. Therefore, diversity and inclusiveness belong in a human rights context.

ERFA is committed to its Australia based and in-country project personnel (its human capital) as its most precious assets. This human capital is comprised of the collective sum of the individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, inventiveness, innovation, self-expression, unique capabilities and talents of ERFA's Australia based and in-country project personnel.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to articulate ERFA's commitment to the principles of diversity and inclusiveness in its Australia based operations and its expectation that these principles will be adhered to by the projects it supports in developing nations.

This Diversity & Inclusiveness Policy establishes standards of behaviour expected of all Australia based and in-country project personnel.

Related Policies

This Diversity and inclusiveness Policy is to be read in conjunction with ERFA's:

- Gender Equality & Female Empowerment Policy
- Complaints Handling Policy
- Harassment Policy
- Occupational Health & Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

Policy

With respect to diversity and inclusiveness, ERFA is committed to:

- fostering, cultivating and preserving a culture of diversity and inclusion
- the treatment of all persons with dignity and respect at all times
- embracing differences in age, race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, marital status, physical and intellectual ability, disability, political affiliation, religious affiliation, socio-economic status and other characteristics of uniqueness
- respecting the cultures, customs and beliefs of the in-country communities it seeks to serve
- ensuring wide community participation in the planning of the projects it supports
- promoting healthy workplace responsibilities and behaviours and empowering staff and volunteers to manage their relationships in the workplace and resolve workplace concerns and conflicts as early as possible to create a positive workplace culture

- promoting the resolution of concerns and conflict through consultation, cooperation and collaborative discussion
- the prevention of bullying, discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), vilification and victimisation

Diversity awareness training opportunities are to be provided for Australia based and in-country project personnel.

Any staff member or volunteer who believes they have been subjected to any kind of discrimination that conflicts with ERFA's Diversity & Inclusiveness Policy should follow the procedures set out in ERFA's Complaints Handling Policy.

Disability

ERFA's commitment to persons living with a disability is informed by the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

ERFA believes that respect for diversity and the elimination of negative attitudes towards disability are facilitated through the promotion of a better understanding of the diverse lived experiences and perspectives of people living with disability.

ERFA is aware that women and girls in developing nations living with disability often face multiple forms of discrimination due to their gender, disability and consequent economic status and often face a greater risk of abuse and violence. Such inequalities impact on access to education, employment, health services and decision-making. Consequently, women and girls are over-represented amongst those living in poverty. Children living with disability face significant barriers to enjoying the same rights and freedoms as their peers and often face greater risks of abuse.

With respect to people living with a disability, ERFA is committed to:

- promotion of the dignity and well-being of people living with disabilities
- the belief that people living with disability share the same rights and freedoms as all persons
- enabling the participation of people living with disabilities in decision making in project design and all stages of the project cycle
- considering issues of disability and inclusion for people living with disabilities in project design, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation
- the support of projects with a specific outreach to and advocacy for people living with disabilities
- the inclusion of people with disabilities in its employment policy

Equal Opportunity - Employment

With respect to equal employment opportunity principles and practice, ERFA is committed to:

- ensuring that equal opportunity exists in all areas of employment
- recruitment and selection decisions based on merit according to qualifications, skills, abilities, experience and aptitudes and not affected by irrelevant personal characteristics
- provision of employment conditions and opportunities for professional development without discrimination
- provision of a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, sexual harassment, and racial and religious vilification
- provision of reasonable flexibility in working arrangements, especially where needed to accommodate employees' family and carer responsibilities, disability, religion and culture and work/life balance

- the right to raise issues or to make an enquiry or complaint in a reasonable and respectful manner without being victimised

Equal Opportunity – Board Composition

With respect to board composition, ERFA is committed to:

- ensuring an appropriate and diverse mix of skills and experience to deliver value and respond to challenges that may arise;
- setting a target of at least 30% men and 30% women in Board positions by 2018;
- maintaining a diversity target for Board composition, setting a three-year diversity target at the end of each three-year term (this diversity target may relate to gender, ethnicity, age, physical abilities, sexual orientation or religious beliefs);
- including in ERFA's annual report to members a statement regarding the progress to achieving the diversity target (and if the diversity target has not been met at the end of the three-year period, providing reasons for the failure to meet the diversity target).

Equal Opportunity – Membership Composition

With respect to membership composition, ERFA is committed to:

- setting a target of at least 30% men and 30% women in membership base by 2018.

With respect to equal employment opportunity principles and practice, ERFA is committed to:

Relevant Commonwealth Legislation

- Age Discrimination Act 2004
- Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984

There are also Australian state and territory laws that cover discrimination.