



## **EQUITY Diversity & INCLUSION POLICY**

Effective from: 2013  
Designated person responsible: Chair MEDI  
Committee Overall responsibility: IGG's Board  
(Executive committee)  
Last reviewed in January 2022  
Due for review in 2025

## **1. General principles underpinning the policy**

**Equity** – IGG acknowledges difficulties faced by certain groups in Irish society. We want to ensure equal access. We acknowledge that participation is the lynchpin of integration and that the two are inseparable.

**Diversity** – will be welcomed, respected, and encouraged by raising all IGG members' awareness of the difficulties faced by certain groups in Irish society. We can help to foster and encourage an environment of openness, interaction, **tolerance**, understanding, respect and inclusiveness

**Inclusion** - Inclusion of girls and women from all walks of life in IGG Units will be promoted and encouraged through support, training, and resources for IGG leaders. Irish Girl Guides' Membership Policy states that "membership is voluntary and open to all who live their lives as female and accept the Guide Law and Promise." This means that membership is based on gender identity and IGG remains a space which is focused on and driven by the experience of girls.

**Belonging** - The aim of the equity and Inclusion policy is to give all members a sense of belonging that empowers them to be their authentic selves and know that they are valued.

## **2. Policy statement**

The Irish Girl Guides respects and values the diversity of its members and of society. Irish Girl Guides' Membership Policy states that "membership is voluntary and open to all who live their lives as female and accept the Guide Law and Promise." This means that membership is based on gender identity and IGG remains a space which is focused on and driven by the experience of girls. The Irish Girl Guides believes that every member should be encouraged to explore their beliefs and take an active part in the religion or faith of their family or community, where appropriate. Through Guiding girls are helped and encouraged to explore the topics of faith or spirituality with an open mind and with respect for others 'beliefs or lack thereof in accordance with the Promise and the Journey programme.

The Irish Girl Guides is committed to promoting interculturalism throughout the organisation for youth members, volunteers, members of management committees and staff. IGG believes that valuing and fostering diversity is about recognising and appreciating individual needs and differences and treating everyone with dignity and respect.

The Irish Girl Guides undertakes its responsibility to comply with equality legislation in particular The Equal Status Acts 2000-2018. As such it is committed to ensuring that no young person or adult is treated less favourably than another on grounds of gender, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

Membership of IGG is based on gender identity, anyone who lives their life as female and accepts the Guide law and promise is welcome to join. Male adults are welcome in a supportive role as Unit

Helpers.

The Irish Girl Guides is committed to prevent any form of discrimination, inequality, or denial of equal opportunity, whether direct or indirect against youth members, volunteers, members of management committees and staff. IGG is committed to ensure that it fulfils its legal obligation under existing equality legislation.

The Irish Girl Guides seeks to actively demonstrate its celebration of diversity and its commitment to equity by placing these tenets central to all the policies, processes, procedures, and programme of the organisation. We are proactively engaged in a process of continuous improvement including self- assessing how inclusive we are at all levels, be it national or local, examining visible and invisible barriers to participation, and actively planning to remove them as they become apparent.

### **3. Rationale for this**

The Irish Girl Guides provides an environment where girls and young women from all backgrounds, faiths and abilities are welcome. The Membership, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committee (MEDI) has been set up to work to ensure that individuals and members of all groups in society can be actively included in Guiding.

### **4. Responsibilities**

The MEDI committee is responsible for ensuring that policies are adhered to, and strategies are put into practice by the committee/people responsible, with the overall responsibility being with IGG Board. The Equality and Inclusion Policy must be followed by all IGG members, volunteer leaders, unit helpers, committees and staff to foster a sense of belonging across the organisation **Policy review**

IGG's Equity and Inclusion policy should be reviewed every three years to keep in line with current legislation and good practice.

### **5. Complaint's procedure**

A breach of any aspect of this policy will be treated seriously and should be raised initially with specific person/committee/contact that Members or individuals can contact should a complaint arise who will follow the guidelines as set out in the Irish Girl Guides Safeguarding and Child Protection booklet. The individual in question/IGG may contact the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) for further guidance

Reference:

IGG Complaints Policy: <https://irishgirlguides.ie/leaders-area/handbook/policies/>

IHREC - <https://www.ihrec.ie/>

<https://www.ihrec.ie/app/uploads/2022/08/IHREC-Equal-Status-Rights-Leaflet-WEB.pdf>