

INCLUSION IRELAND

Equality and Human Rights Statement

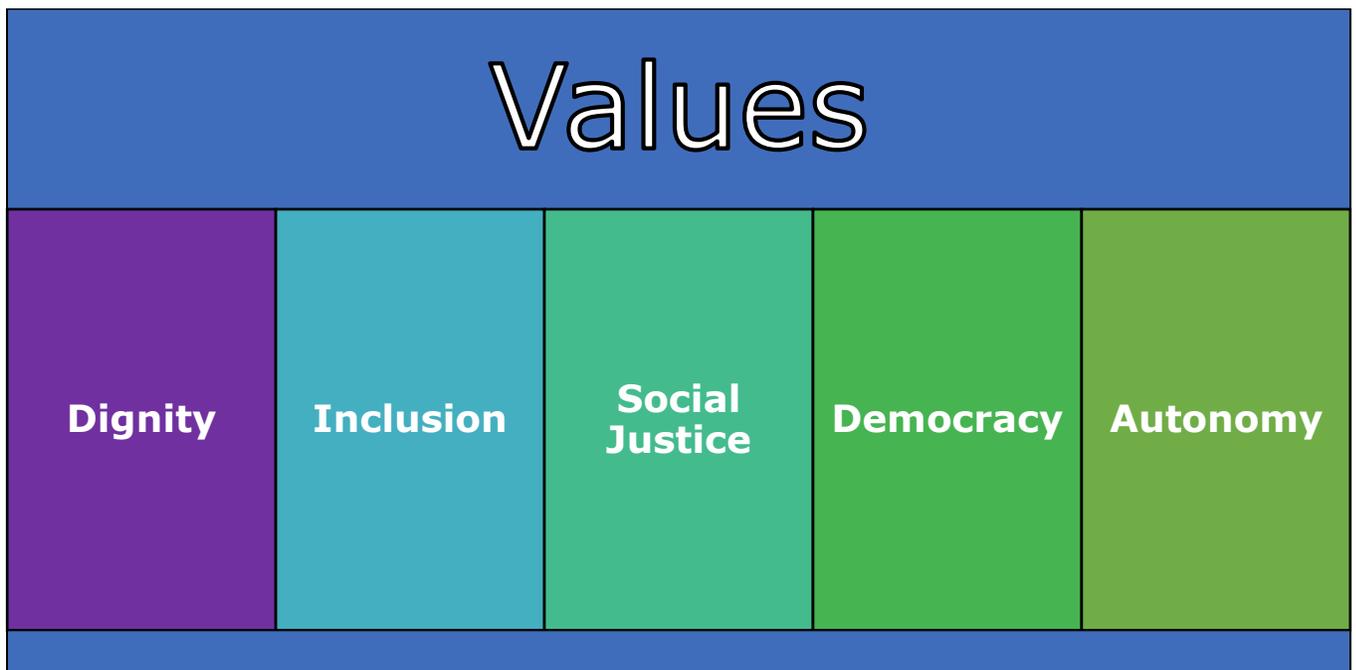


Introduction

This statement reflects our commitment to equality and human rights and to bringing this commitment into our work. It underpins our ambition to work towards eliminating discrimination against, promoting equality of opportunity for and protecting the human rights of people with intellectual disabilities.

Values and Objectives

Values are those ideals that motivate us as individuals and as an organisation. The values of dignity, inclusion, social justice, democracy and autonomy define and underpin our commitment to equality and human rights. Each value informs the objectives we pursue and issues we seek to address in our work.



Dignity is about respecting and recognising the value of each person with an intellectual disability and challenging where this does not happen.

Inclusion Ireland Objective:

That public and publicly funded services treat people with intellectual disabilities with dignity and respect and that our interactions with people are accessible, friendly and respectful, involve listening, and are timely.

We, therefore, wish to advance change in relation to the following equality and human rights issues:

- Accessibility of information and public services.
- Public and publicly funded services that are friendly, respectful, responsive and timely.
- Barriers to addressing bad treatment by publicly funded services, such as inaccessible or expensive redress and complaints procedures.
- Laws that impact negatively on the dignity of people with intellectual disabilities in areas of relationships, family life, financial control and hate crime.
- Attitudes of the general public towards people with intellectual disabilities.

Inclusion

Inclusion is about people with intellectual disabilities being visible, taking part, being involved and being considered. It involves valuing and respecting diversity.

Inclusion Ireland Objective:

That the diverse population of people with intellectual disabilities engage in and are embraced by all areas of society.

We, therefore wish to advance change in the following equality and human rights issues:

- Full participation of people with intellectual disabilities in community life.
- Full participation of people with intellectual disabilities in key areas such as education, training and employment.
- Housing provision for people with intellectual disabilities.
- The provision of enabling supports and of reasonable accommodation for people with intellectual disabilities to enable this full participation.
- Institutionalised barriers to and inadequate supports for access and participation.
- Recognition for the diversity of and diversity among people with intellectual disabilities.

Social Justice: is about a fair and more equal distribution of resources such that people with an intellectual disability can live lives of their own choosing, lives that they have reason to value.

Inclusion Ireland Objective:

That resources are shared and redistributed such that people with intellectual disabilities realise more personally satisfying outcomes and achievements in their lives.

We, therefore, wish to advance change in the following equality and human rights issues:

- Poverty and social exclusion among people with intellectual disabilities.
- Inadequate income and lack of state or societal acknowledgement of the cost of disability.
- Access to educational/training/employment supports and opportunities.
- Lack of personal supports for individual people with intellectual disability.
- Absence of rights to services or supports in law.
- Financial disincentives to paid employment such as the loss of secondary or supplemental benefits.

Democracy is about people with intellectual disabilities having an equal say and having their voice heard. It is concerned with participation in decision-making and access to decision making fora and requires openness, transparency and accountability. It involves self-representation and, when needed, representation or co-decision-making, involving a relative or friend where a relationship of trust exists between those involved.

Inclusion Ireland Objective:

That effective and accountable partnerships, involving people with intellectual disabilities and, where appropriate, relatives or friends where a relationship of trust exists, are achieved in relevant policy and decision-making structures.

We, therefore wish to advance change in the following equality and human rights issues:

- The absence of people with intellectual disabilities in policy and decision-making structures at any level.
- Lack of supports for, inaccessible processes in, and limited good practice models of participation in policy and decision-making structures.
- Cultural biases and low levels of expectation of and ambition for people with intellectual disabilities.
- Limited collective and political organisation of people with disabilities and of families of people with intellectual disabilities.
- Lack of preparation for people with intellectual disabilities in their daily lives to participate in decision-making.
- Lack of commitment to partnership working with, and problem-solving led by, people with intellectual disabilities and, when needed, their relatives or friends with whom a relationship of trust exists.

Autonomy

Autonomy: is about respecting and recognising the will and preference of people with intellectual disabilities to live self-directed lives. It involves people having and making choices.

Inclusion Ireland Objective:

That people with intellectual disabilities have a life within the wider community and have control over the choices they make.

We, therefore, wish to advance change in the following equality and human rights issues:

- Negative public perceptions and attitudes that limit possibilities for people with intellectual disabilities to have and make choices.
- The need for proactive work to build confidence and self-advocacy skills among people with intellectual disabilities.
- Structural and institutional barriers that limit opportunities for risk taking.
- Implementation of the Assisted Decision-Making Act to clarify the status of people with intellectual disabilities as decision-makers.
- The need for people with intellectual disabilities to have control over their own finances and over their own relationships.
- Control of budgets for the support needs of people with intellectual disabilities by agencies rather than by the individual with learning disabilities or, as needed, relatives or friends with whom a relationship of trust exists.

Using Our Equality and Human Rights Statement

This statement brings equality and human rights focus to our work and informs the deliberations, decisions and actions of the Board, sub-committees and working groups, management, staff, and self-advocacy groups.

We will use the statement:

- At our Board and staff meetings as a guide to decision-making.
- In assessing performance as individual staff and Board members.
- In assessing performance of the organisation and its different structures.

We will use the statement:

- To shape the development, monitoring, and evaluation of our strategic plan.
- To shape the development and monitoring of our annual work plans.
- In responding to policy issues and developing policy submissions.

We will:

- Keep stakeholders informed of the statement and the values that motivate our work.
- Promote the statement to our members.
- Ensure an ongoing communication of our values to our funding organisations.

We will:

- Communicate our values and the approach to our values in the statement to the general public, stakeholders, service provider organisations, and public sector bodies.
- Develop our communication materials in a manner that imaginatively communicates our values.
- Promote our values through social media

We will:

- Keep the statement under review and update it as necessary.

Further Reading

Transforming the Civil and Public Service - **Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission**

A New Public Sector Equality & Human Rights Duty – **Equality & Rights Alliance**

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