

Diversity Committee

Terms of Reference

July 2019

Background

Following a review of processes and procedures for the election of new Members, Academy established a Diversity Committee in June 2016 to (a) establish where imbalances may lie in nominations and (b) identify underrepresented constituencies and encourage nominations from these areas. Since its inception, significant work has been carried out by the Committee in pursuit of these aims. However, with the increasing importance of diversity in all aspects of the Academy's life, the Committee recommended a re-appraisal of its composition and objectives in order to more fully meet the Academy's ambition.

Diversity is central to one of the three Strategic Goals of the Academy's Strategic Plan (2019-2023). In order to guide and support the implementation of the Academy's vision of greater diversity and inclusion, Council (June 2019) approved revised and broadened terms of reference for the Diversity Committee.

Purpose

The Diversity Committee will work towards ensuring greater gender, disciplinary, institutional and overall diversity in all areas of the Academy and its work throughout the island of Ireland. Its work will inform actions that will increase diversity in membership of the Academy, and in Academy committees, working groups and boards.

Being mindful of the Academy's core values of independence, excellence, scholarship and collaboration, the Committee, in its work, will consider a broad range of diversity including (but not limited to) gender, discipline, age, stage of career, institution, geography, ability and ethnicity.

The Diversity Committee will report to Council and to the Executive Committee.

The Committee will:

- Work with Academy staff, Academy Membership and higher education institutions throughout the island of Ireland to help identify potential candidates for Membership from within institutions and from independent scholars.
Once individuals have been identified, the Committee and the Secretary may, in confidence, approach MRIs in similar or cognate fields to determine their willingness to nominate potential candidates.
Nominations resulting from the work of the Diversity Committee will be treated in the same way as nominations that arrive via the usual process.
- Drive and monitor appropriate diversity in Academy activities including (but not limited to):
 - Nominations for Academy medals, awards and grants
 - Academy Committees, boards and working groups
 - Speakers and participation in panels at Academy events.
- Promote, through reports, events and activities, the awareness, actions and activities of the Academy in the area of diversity.
- Provide practical recommendations that will assist with increasing diversity in the

membership and work of the Academy.

Composition

The Diversity Committee will comprise a maximum of 10 persons, consisting of the Chair, Vice-Chair and up to 8 other members. Members of the Committee will normally be Members of the Royal Irish Academy..

The Committee membership should reflect cognizance of diversity elements as appropriate to the Academy.

The Chair of the Committee will be a Vice-President of the Academy.

The membership of the Committee shall be subject to approval by the RIA Council.

Term of Office

Members of the standing committees will normally serve a four-year term. Members may be appointed for a second term.

Committee members will be expected to participate regularly in the meetings and activities of the committee. Members who do not participate regularly may be asked to step down before the end of their term of membership, at the discretion of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

Meetings of the Diversity Committee

Meetings should be held as often as is deemed necessary and no less than twice per year. Meetings will normally take place in Academy House but may be held elsewhere. Notice will be sent at least two weeks in advance of a planned meeting.