

EQUITY & INCLUSION GUIDE

This guide has been developed by the IFPTE Women's Solidarity Network (WSN) to assist IFPTE members, elected officers and staff to incorporate equity into our union work. Our membership is diverse and being conscious about equity issues will help our union thrive and improve the participation of all members.

Members who identify as equity-seeking may include young workers, LGBTQ2S+ workers, Indigenous workers, racialized workers, workers with disabilities and women workers.

Equity is the fair treatment, access, opportunity and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups. Equity and equality are two different strategies that aim to produce fairness. Equity is giving everyone what they need to be successful. Equality is treating everyone the same. Equality aims to promote fairness, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same help.

An equity lens helps to:

- Increase awareness about diversity, equity and inclusion
- Allow the incorporation and recognition of diverse perspectives in the union/workplace
- Improve administration of programs, policies and allocation of resources
- Involve new groups of members who are not active or involved
- Open new communication channels

**Equity is
a union
issue.**



TOP 10 DOs

for **EQUITY &**
INCLUSION

1.

BECOME CULTURALLY COMPETENT.

Be a diversity champion and be self-aware. Embracing diversity in our union/workplace starts with managing your own attitude and behaviour. Take time to learn about different cultures, gender expressions/identities, races, religions and backgrounds represented in our union/workplace. Be conscious about the words or phrases you use. Become familiar with diversity-related terms and, if you err, apologize and ask for help. Remember, it is not the responsibility of those who experience oppression to provide education or explain their struggles to those in the dominant group whose privilege has shielded them from understanding the experiences of marginalized groups. Google is your friend when you don't know and want to learn! Self-awareness is key to developing an environment where all members feel safe and comfortable to talk about equity.

2.

BE BOLD AND LEAD.

As activists and leaders within the union, you have an opportunity to set the tone and influence the organization. You can demonstrate a commitment to incorporate equity, diversity and inclusion policies into every aspect of the union's function and purpose. Leadership at the top must also provide guidance, resources and support to ensure success within the organization at all levels.



TAKE AN ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN.

3.

Take note of the structures and practices within your union. What's working well and what isn't? Who can you approach to assist in developing equity work in your local union? Talk to members who might be interested in getting involved. Familiarize yourself with what resources exist and find out about any previous and current equity initiatives within your local union. Look to see what other IFPTE Locals are doing and draw inspiration from groundwork that's been laid elsewhere.

SEE BEYOND NUMBERS.

4.

Move away from conceptualizing diversity, equity and inclusion principles solely as a numbers-based goal and instead see its potential to transform your local union into a vibrant organization embedding equity, diversity and inclusion goals into its strategic plan.

HAVE A PLAN.

5.

Identify what you want to achieve. Develop a short-term and long-term plan. Equity and inclusion work takes time. Building support for organizational change, whether it is for introducing a new policy or changing a practice, requires support from members and leaders. Think about your plan in small steps. Recognize that "quick fixes" will not sustain the level of commitment required to achieve diversity goals.

OFFER TRAINING.

6.

Sometimes members have had little exposure to the topic and learning about it is the first step in the right direction. Equity and inclusion is a process and organizations are constantly evolving and adapting to be more responsive. This is why ongoing education and training is an important element to achieving equity within our union.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY.

7.

Look up related union policies and resolutions. Is there anything that will help you advance your plan? Share what you've discovered with others in the union to help get things started. If there are no policies in place, you're in a great position to start from scratch. There are many unions out there with comprehensive policies and materials you can analyze and adapt from.



8.

BE AN ALLY.

Speak up for diversity issues that are not necessarily your own. In social justice terms, an ally is typically a member of a dominant group who decides to stand beside and support member(s) of a group that is disadvantaged and/or marginalized. An ally works to create positive change rather than participate in oppression. Allies will never speak for the group but will always walk in solidarity to with them in support.

9.

MAKE SPACE.

Build space for members from equity seeking groups to come together. Give them tools and resources needed to self organize. Ensure there are enough supports available for them to develop their own agenda. This could include providing meeting space during conferences and conventions or forming a committee.

10.

COMMIT TO CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

Be willing to learn, accept feedback and listen to the concerns of those around you. Even the most enlightened individual can find opportunities for growth. Diversity, inclusion and equity work is a journey, not a destination. It takes time, patience and perseverance.

WSN is a project of the IFPTE. Our mandate is to connect members together and promote the involvement of women within IFPTE and the broader labour movement.

