



RCSI

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY
& INCLUSION

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

STRATEGY & ACTION PLAN 2018 – 2022

Table of contents

1. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT RCSI	4
2. VISION	6
3. CONTEXT	6
4. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK	8
5. GOVERNANCE	11
6. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES	13
Strategic objective 1 – FOUNDATION	14
Strategic objective 2 – DATA	15
Strategic objective 3 – ACCOUNTABILITY	16
Strategic objective 4 – KNOWLEDGE	17
Strategic objective 5 – COMMUNITY	18
Strategic objective 6 – COLLABORATION	19





1. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at RCSI

The RCSI Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy 2018 - 2022 builds on RCSI's commitment to EDI as a foundational pillar of the RCSI Strategic Plan 2018 – 2022. It sets out a road map for our EDI work and serves as a proactive and collaborative approach to advancing the EDI agenda at RCSI. It recognises that EDI must be central to everything we do and embedded across all functions of the college so that each individual can make the most of the lives and talents.

The Strategy is determined by the RCSI community of students and staff. It is derived from a comprehensive needs assessment which took place in 2017/18 to identify key equality, diversity and inclusion issues for students and staff. Drawing on the available evidence, including the knowledge and experience of the RCSI community, the assessment informs the strategic cycle of planning, implementation and evaluation. It identifies structures and initiatives needed to support equality, diversity and inclusion. It also identifies inequalities and discrimination and prioritises areas for action, so that all members of the community have an equal opportunity to flourish.

The strategy is based on the following high level objectives:

Strategic Objective 1 – FOUNDATION

To support RCSI's vision and strategic priorities to embed an equality, diversity and inclusion framework across the institution

Strategic Objective 2 – DATA

To capture robust and reliable EDI data for students and employees in order to monitor progress across the 10 equality grounds

Strategic Objective 3 – ACCOUNTABILITY

To promote a culture of individual ownership and shared community values of dignity, respect and fairness for all, so as to eliminate discrimination and harassment

Strategic Objective 4 – KNOWLEDGE

To increase the knowledge, skills and awareness of the RCSI community to effectively understand and reflect upon EDI issues.

Strategic Objective 5 – COMMUNITY

To recruit and retain a diverse body of students and employees at RCSI, by building a sustainable community of practice around EDI and creating a learning/working experience that allows each individual an equal opportunity to thrive.

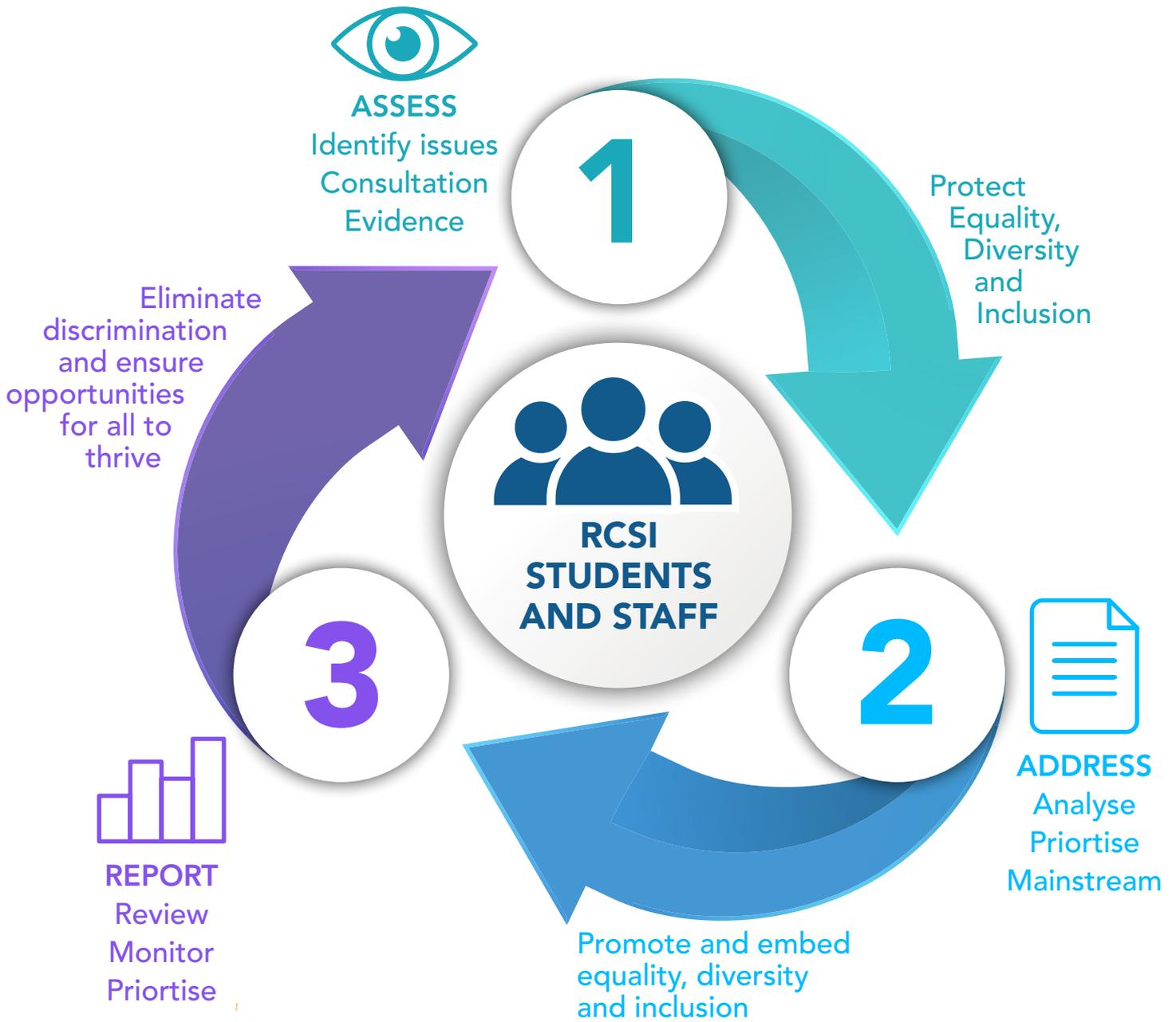
Strategic Objective 6 – COLLABORATION

To engage with external stakeholders to bolster EDI best practice across RCSI.

We hope that in implementing this action plan, we can be leaders in this space and champion EDI as core to health sciences education globally. Through this strategy document we are committing to mainstreaming equality, diversity and inclusion; to tackling inequality and discrimination; and ensuring that RCSI is a place where every member of the RCSI community feels welcome and that they belong.



PROCESS FOR EDI STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT



2. Vision

RCSI is committed to embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) across everything we do. This ensures that we can all work and learn in an environment which is defined by dignity and respect, and that everyone in RCSI is treated fairly regardless of ability, age, civil status, family status, gender, membership of the Traveller community, race, religion, sexual orientation or socio-economic status.



3. Context

What is Equality, Diversity & Inclusion?

Equality is about dignity and respect. It is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents, and believing that no one should have poorer life chances because of where, what or whom they were born, what they believe, or whether they have a disability. Equality is not always about treating everyone the same – it is about treating people in such a way that the outcome for each person can be the same. This means putting things in place to support people to achieve similar outcomes.

Diversity is about differences, seen and unseen.

Inclusion is about creating an environment where people are valued, feel valued and are able to achieve and contribute to their full potential.

An inclusive environment improves interaction with staff, students and our wider community.

10 GROUNDS

RCSI's equality, diversity and inclusion work is based on the ten equality grounds set out below

1

AGE

A person's age includes only those over 16.

2

CIVIL STATUS

Whether a person is single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, civil partnered or formerly civil partnered.

3

DISABILITY

A person with an enduring physical, sensory, mental health or intellectual impairment.

4

FAMILY STATUS

Being pregnant or having responsibility as a parent or relation to a person under 18 years, or as a parent or carer for an adult with a disability.

5

GENDER

A person's gender identity be it male, female, transgender or non-binary.

6

**MEMBERSHIP
OF THE
TRAVELLER
COMMUNITY**A recognised
ethnic group.

7

**RACE/
ETHNICITY**A person's skin
colour, national or
ethnic origins.

8

RELIGIONA person's religious
beliefs or having
none, the term
'religious belief'
includes religious
background and
outlook.

9

**SEXUAL
ORIENTATION**A person's sexual
orientation
including
heterosexual,
lesbian, gay and
bisexual.

10

**SOCIO-
ECONOMIC
STATUS**A person's social
and economic
background.

4. Legislative Framework

Equality is enshrined in the Irish Constitution and there is comprehensive legislation and structures in place to address discrimination.

The Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 outlaw discrimination in a wide range of employment and employment-related areas. These include recruitment and promotion; equal pay; working conditions; training or experience; dismissal and harassment including sexual harassment. The legislation defines discrimination as treating one person in a less favourable way than another person based on any of the nine equality grounds: age, civil status, disability, gender, family status, membership of the Traveller community, religion, race and sexual orientation.

The aspects of employment which are covered under the Employment Equality Acts include:

- Advertising
- Equal pay
- Access to employment
- Vocational training and work experience
- Terms and conditions of employment
- Promotion or re-grading
- Classification of posts
- Dismissal
- Collective agreements.

THE DISABILITY ACT 2005 PART 5 For many years public bodies have pursued a positive action measure which set a 3% target for the employment of people with disabilities in the public service. The Disability Act Part 5 gives the 3% target legal status and goes further by:

- allowing each Minister to expand the range of positive actions which public bodies, within their area of responsibility, must take for the employment of people with disabilities
- giving a special role to the National Disability Authority (NDA) in monitoring compliance and ensuring implementation. Ministers may also approve Codes of Practice to assist public bodies.

CODE OF PRACTICE ON SEXUAL HARASSMENT AND HARASSMENT 2012

The code was produced by the Department of Justice, Equality and Law reform in 2012 and seeks to promote the development and implementation of policies and procedures which establish working environments free of sexual harassment and harassment and in which the dignity of everyone is respected. The provisions of the code are admissible in evidence and if relevant may be taken into account in any criminal or other proceedings before a court.



VICTIMISATION UNDER THE EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY ACTS 1998-2015

Under the Acts, it is 'victimisation' if an employer penalises an employee because they have made a complaint under either the Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 or the Equal Status Acts 2000-2015. Victimisation is against the law.

SECTION 42 OF THE IHREC ACT 2014

Section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Act 2014 has established a positive duty on public sector bodies to:

- eliminate discrimination
- promote equality of opportunity and treatment
- protect human rights This means that all public bodies in Ireland have responsibility to promote equality, prevent discrimination and protect the human rights of their employees, customers, service users and everyone affected by their policies and plans.

This is a legal obligation, called the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty. RCSI is committed to undertaking Public Sector Duty by 2020. Under the RCSI Strategic Plan 2018 – 2020, RCSI is committed to supporting "a culture that advances our goals by building on our values of Respect, Collaboration, Scholarship and Innovation, and our aim to equip staff and students for personal and professional success".

For more information see:

www.citizensinformation.ie;

www.ihrec.ie

WHAT IS DISCRIMINATION?

Discrimination has a specific meaning in equality law. In the Employment Equality Acts the definition of discrimination focuses on whether a person has been treated less favourably in the workplace than another person in a similar situation on any of the nine grounds. Discrimination can be direct or indirect. While direct discrimination is often more obvious, indirect discrimination has a similar impact on employees. Indirect discrimination can happen when organisations' policies and practices have negative consequences for some people. For example, indirect discrimination can occur if a policy or practice, which is applied to all employees, has the effect of putting an employee at a disadvantage because of his/ her/their experience. It can also happen where a requirement that may appear non-discriminatory adversely affects a particular group or class of persons.

WHAT IS 'POSITIVE ACTION'?

Under the Acts, 'positive action' means that the employer can take steps that are not required under the law to promote equality for all their workers. In particular, employers can take positive action measure in relation to the gender ground, people over 50, people with disabilities and members of the Traveller community.

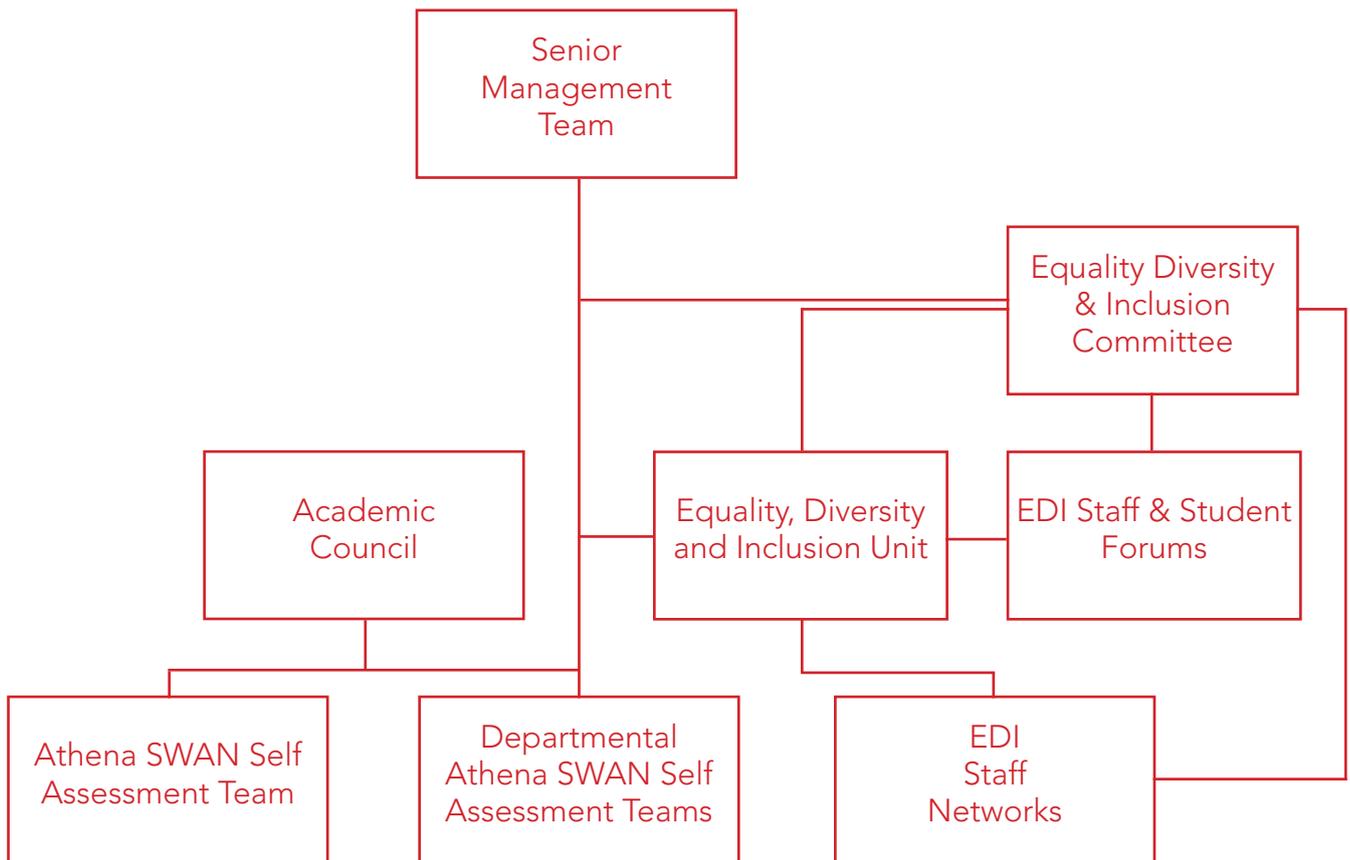




5. Governance

The RCSI Senior Management Team holds overall responsibility for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

The wider EDI infrastructure at RCSI comprises the following:

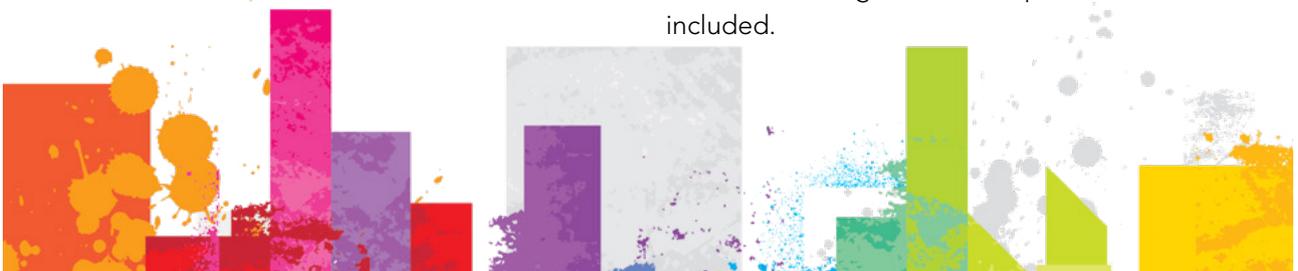


SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

The senior management team meets weekly to manage the development of the organisation. The role of the CEO parallels those of the presidents of the publicly funded universities; the Dean is the chief academic officer, and RCSI Directors hold similar functions to Vice-President/ Chancellor Roles in publicly funded universities. EDI is a key priority for SMT, with an SMT member leading the EDI Committee.

EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION COMMITTEE

The EDI Committee is responsible for overseeing and providing guidance and direction for the achievement of equality, diversity and inclusion objectives identified in the RCSI Strategic Plan 2018 - 2022, to identify and help remove barriers, and make recommendations to SMT as appropriate. Its membership is comprised of representatives from across the College. Student representatives are also included.



ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Academic Council is the senior academic and administrative forum for deliberation on all academic matters. It addresses all matters concerning the administration of RCSI's schools. This includes student admissions, assessment, progression and welfare in all degree level programmes; curricula and learning technology; research activities; and academic promotions. Academic Council supports EDI actions, and Athena SWAN reporting.

EDI UNIT

The RCSI Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Unit manages, promotes and coordinates EDI activities across the College. A dedicated RCSI EDI Unit, which reports directly to the RCSI CEO, was established in July 2017 and is comprised of four staff.



ATHENA SWAN SELF ASSESSMENT TEAM (SAT)

The purpose of the Athena SWAN Institutional SAT is to progress the aims and objectives of the Athena SWAN Charter and ensure that its aims are integrated into day-to-day operations and decision-making across RCSI. The SAT is chaired by the Registrar/CEO and is comprised of academic, research, professional staff and students. The SAT is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of the Athena SWAN gender equality action plan and evolving the action plan in response to evaluation. RCSI is required to hold an institutional Athena SWAN Bronze award by 2019 and a Silver award by 2023.

DEPARTMENTAL ATHENA SWAN SELF ASSESSMENT TEAMS (SATS)

Under the Athena SWAN process, there are six Athena SWAN departmental SATs (comprised of individual schools, departments or a combination of departments subject to size). These departments are responsible for developing a departmental level Athena SWAN action plan to underpin advancement against the agreed institutional and departmental priorities. The majority of departments are required to hold a Bronze award by 2023 and one department is required to hold a Silver award.

EDI STAFF & STUDENT FORUMS

EDI Staff & Student Forums are formal consultation groups developed to address EDI issues which impact both staff and students across the RCSI campus where a dedicated policy and action plan is required. These Forums are supported by the EDI Unit. Focus areas include:

- Gender Identity and Expression
- Consent & Bystander Intervention
- Race Equality
- Access

EDI STAFF NETWORKS

RCSI has established six staff equality networks. These are driven by staff interests and supported by the EDI Unit. The EDI Networks are championed by SMT Sponsors and driven by staff themselves with rotating staff chairs each year. Staff networks include:

- Age Friendly Network
- Men's Shed
- Parents and Carers Network
- Pride Network
- Women's Network
- Intercultural Network

6. Strategic Objectives

Progress against Strategic Objectives

In order to progress our work on equality, diversity and inclusion and meet our legal obligations, we have developed a set of **six EDI Strategic Objectives 2018 – 2022:**

1. FOUNDATION

To support RCSI's vision and strategic priorities to **embed an equality, diversity and inclusion framework** across the institution.

2. DATA

To ensure comprehensive and reliable **EDI data collection and processing mechanisms** for students and employees in order to monitor progress across the 10 equality grounds.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

To promote a **culture of individual ownership and shared community values of dignity, respect and fairness for all**, so as to eliminate discrimination and harassment.

4. KNOWLEDGE

To **increase the knowledge, skills and awareness** of the RCSI community to effectively understand and reflect upon EDI issues.

5. COMMUNITY

To **recruit and retain a diverse body of students and employees** at RCSI, by building a sustainable community of practice around EDI and creating a learning/working experience that allows each individual an equal opportunity to thrive.

6. COLLABORATION

To **engage with external stakeholders** on EDI related matters to bolster EDI best practice across RCSI.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1 – FOUNDATION

To support RCSI's vision and strategic priorities to embed an equality, diversity and inclusion framework across the institution.

Impact: Ensures EDI is sustainable through strong leadership, good governance, effective systems and structures, and adequate resources.

Action	Success Measure	Timeframe
1.1 Establish RCSI EDI Unit	1.1 Dedicated EDI operations unit established to lead EDI implementation	2018
1.2 Input to RCSI Institutional Strategic Plan	1.2 EDI included as foundation pillar of RCSI Strategic Plan 2018-2022	2018
1.3 Develop EDI Strategy & Action Plan 2019 – 2022	1.3 Evidence based EDI Strategy and Action Plan published to ensure EDI is mainstreamed across RCSI	2019
1.4 Prepare Annual EDI Action Plan & Budget	1.4 Annual Action Plan and budget provides for targeted, costed EDI programme of work	Annually
1.5 Publish EDI Annual Report	1.5 EDI Annual Report provides impact assessment of EDI interventions to SMT, Council and wider RCSI community.	Annually
1.6 Establish EDI Committee with SMT leadership	1.6 EDI Committee, which is reflective of the RCSI community, provides oversight and guidance on EDI interventions	2019
1.7 Develop, implement and monitor (Athena SWAN) Gender Equality Action Plan	1.7 Institutional Athena SWAN Bronze award achieved and maintained	2019-2023
1.8 Develop, implement and monitor Access Action Plan and Policy	1.8 Ensures universal access and appropriate supports in place across RCSI campus' in line with National Disability Authority guidelines	2019-2022
1.9 Develop, implement & monitor Positive Aging Action Plan	1.9 RCSI is recognised as an Age Friendly University	2019-2022
1.10 Develop, implement & monitor Race Equality Action Plan (Race Equality Charter)	1.10 Ensures RCSI is welcoming to all, underpinned by a zero tolerance policy on racism and race based discrimination/harassment.	2020-2022
1.11 Develop, implement & monitor Pride Action Plan	1.11 RCSI is inclusive and promotes allyship of LGBTQ+ colleagues	2019-2022
1.12 Develop, implement & monitor HEA Framework to Address Sexual Harassment/ Violence	1.12 RCSI ensures effective supports are in place for survivors of sexual harassment/violence	2019-2022



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2 – DATA

To capture robust and reliable EDI data for students and employees in order to monitor progress across the 10 equality grounds.

Impact: Ensures evidence based EDI action planning and tracks progress to ensure intervention areas are highlighted and underrepresentation is addressed as required.

Action	Success Measure	Timeframe
2.1 Enhance EDI data collection processes for RCSI staff at recruitment and promotions	2.1 Increased diversity of staff body and greater understanding of EDI drivers in staff population	2019
2.2 Enhance EDI data collection processes for RCSI students at registration	2.2 Increased diversity of student body and greater understanding of EDI drivers in student population	2019
2.3 Incorporate EDI criteria on data collection tools	2.3 CoreHR, Querqus and all local RCSI data collection tools include EDI criteria in data collection and processing	2019
2.4 Undertake annual Staff EDI Consultation (survey, focus groups) Process	2.4 Baseline EDI staff data collected annually to inform EDI needs assessment and track progress against established EDI targets	Annually
2.5 Undertake annual Student (undergrad & postgrad) EDI Consultation Process	2.5 Baseline EDI student data collected annually to inform EDI needs assessment and track progress against established EDI targets	Annually
2.6 Submit annual EDI data returns to the HEA	2.6 National EDI reporting completed to allow for comparative analysis against peer HEIs and track progress against national EDI standards	Annually
2.7 Ensure compliance with data protection mechanisms (GDPR)	2.7 Staff and student EDI data processed in line with GDPR requirements.	Ongoing



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3 – ACCOUNTABILITY

To promote a culture of individual ownership and shared community values of dignity, respect and fairness for all, so as to eliminate discrimination and harassment.

Impact: Ensures EDI proofed policies, practices, monitoring and reporting processes are in place to meet national/international legal requirements and underpin local EDI principles/commitments.

Action	Success Measure	Timeframe
3.1 Develop dedicated EDI Policy	3.1 EDI standards set out in dedicated EDI policy.	2019
3.2 Review and EDI proof Dignity & Respect Policy	3.2 RCSI Dignity & Respect Policy reviewed and EDI proofed	2019
3.3 Establish Policy Review Group	3.3 Policy Review Group established to undertake annual policy review and EDI proof new/existing policies	2019-2022
3.4 Develop Gender Identity & Expression Policy & Action Plan	3.4 Bespoke GIEP developed and launched to support Transgender staff and students	2019
3.5 Develop Core Meetings Hours Policy	3.5 Policy establishes RCSI core meetings as 9am – 5pm	2019
3.6 Develop Equal Representation on Committees Policy	3.6 All RCSI committees, working groups, forums etc to ensure a minimum of 40% male/female representation	2019
3.7 Develop Email Usage Policy	3.7 RCSI staff are not required to respond to emails issued outside of core working hours	2019
3.8 Review supports in place to assist employees or students experiencing bullying or harassment under the 10 equality grounds	3.8 Employee Assistance Programme reviewed with HR and updated awareness raising campaign developed	Ongoing
3.9 Develop and support anonymous online Report & Support Tool and case management system for discrimination & harassment	3.9 Report and Support tool and parallel case management system successfully launched to support anonymous reporting of discrimination & harassment	2020-2022
3.10 Meet Public Sector Duty reporting requirements and complete PSD Framework	3.10 Public Sector Duty completed and regular reporting to IHREC completed.	2020-2022



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 4 – KNOWLEDGE

To increase the knowledge, skills and awareness of the RCSI community to effectively understand and reflect upon EDI issues.

Impact: Enhances the EDI culture by creating opportunities for learning, skills and competency development, which inform institutional expectations related to engagement and behaviour.

Action	Success Measure	Timeframe
4.1 Undertake EDI training needs assessment	4.1 EDI training needs identified for RCSI staff and students	2018
4.2 Deliver EDI training for all staff	4.2 Mandatory online and classroom based training delivered to all staff including: unconscious bias, Trans 101, Access & neurodiversity, anti-racism etc.	2018 -2022
4.3 Partner with peers HEIs to deliver national EDI online training programme – LEAD	4.3 LEAD EDI online training programme successfully launched	2021
4.4 Undertake impact assessment of EDI training initiatives	4.4 RCSI EDI training programme reviewed and impact measured/reported upon	2021
4.5 Develop dedicated EDI branding and communications strategy around key initiatives and landmark programmes e.g. Women on Walls	4.5 Core EDI branding/communications strategy developed. Landmark initiatives identified/implemented.	Ongoing
4.6 Contribute to RCSI curriculum review and support EDI proofing of curriculum materials	4.6 EDI input incorporated to RCSI curriculum review	2019 – 2021
4.7 Offer dedicated EDI module to student leaders	4.7 Bespoke EDI module delivered to student leaders as part of RCSI Student Leadership Initiative	2020 onwards
4.8 Develop EDI training for RCSI academic and research staff	4.8 High level EDI training delivered for RCSI academic and research staff	2021
4.9 Develop EDI learning outcomes and pedagogical resources for EDI specific teaching courses	4.9 Credit bearing EDI modules developed as part of RCSI health sciences and leadership courses	2021
4.10 Develop capacity to successfully apply for research funding related to EDI and healthcare	4.10 Research funding achieved to support analysis of EDI initiatives	2020 onwards
4.11 Offer Women in Leadership Scholarships	4.11 Three 30% Club IoL Women in Leadership scholarships awarded annually	2018 – 2022
4.12 Support training on sexual consent, bystander intervention and managing disclosures	4.12 Mandatory consent training & bystander intervention delivered to all RCSI students and staff. Disclosure training delivered to relevant front line staff.	2019 – 2022
4.13 Develop EDI Calendar of events	4.13 Increased awareness of EDI initiatives through celebration of landmark events e.g. International Women's Day, Pride, Positive Aging Week etc.	2018 – 2022
4.14 Develop EDI guidelines for main RCSI events and communications materials	4.14 EDI best practice mainstreamed across all events and communications	2018 – 2022

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 5 – COMMUNITY

To recruit and retain a diverse body of students and employees at RCSI, by building a sustainable community of practice around EDI and creating a learning/working experience that allows each individual an equal opportunity to thrive.

Impact: Ensures a diverse and inclusive RCSI community through improved student access, staff equity and belonging initiatives, which gives all student and staff an equal opportunity to succeed irrespective of their background.

Action	Success Measure	Timeframe
5.1 Develop EDI guidelines for staff recruitment processes	5.1 Increased diversity of RCSI staff	2019
5.2 Develop EDI guidelines for student recruitment processes	5.2 Maintain diversity of RCSI student body	2021-22
5.3 Contribute to HR staff induction	5.3 Introduction to EDI included in HR staff induction	2018 – 2022
5.4 Contribute to student orientation	5.4 Introduction to EDI included in student orientation	2020
5.5 Continue support HEAR/DARE scheme students	5.5 Full participation of HEAR/DARE students in RCSI community	2018 - 2020
5.6 Undertake EDI access audit/needs assessment of RCSI built environment and implement access action plan	5.6 Access audit of heritage buildings (123 SSG) completed and EDI requirements considered in new building projects.	2018 - 2022
5.7 Develop EDI guidelines for staff and student membership of RCSI committees	5.7 Increased diversity of staff and students on RCSI committees	2020 - 2022
5.8 Establish staff EDI networks	5.8 Six RCSI Staff Networks established: Age Friendly; Parents and Carers; Pride; Intercultural Women's Network; Men's Shed	2018 - 2022
5.9 Support RCSI Student Union and Student Clubs & Societies to engage in EDI initiatives	5.9 Support RCSI students to deliver EDI initiatives	2019 - 2022
5.10 Establish Access Forum	5.10 Support delivery of Access Policy and Action Plan	2018 - 2022
5.11 Establish Consent Forum	5.11 Support delivery of Consent Framework	2019 - 2022
5.12 Establish Race Equality Forum	5.12 Support development and delivery of Race Equality Action Plan	2020 - 2022



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 6 – COLLABORATION

To engage with external stakeholders to bolster EDI best practice across RCSI.

Impact: Build a network with local, national, global EDI leaders and communities of practice to ensure innovation and excellence.

Action	Success Measure	Timeframe
6.1 Engage with peer HEIs, the HEA and Department of Higher on national EDI initiatives and reporting requirements	6.1 Engagement with external higher education stakeholders	2018 - 2022
6.2 Partner with national advocacy and civil society organisations	6.2 Partnership with national advocacy and civil society organisations on EDI initiatives and campaigns	2018 - 2022
6.3 Continue to support Working Group on PROGRESS Gender Equality in Surgery Action Plan and engage with peer international Colleges of Surgery	6.3 PROGRESS Gender Equality in Surgery Report recommendations implemented, including PROGRESS Women in Surgery Fellowship	2018 - 2022
6.4 Diversify EDI income streams through partnership on national/ grant applications	6.4 External EDI grant income received to bolster EDI initiatives	2021-2022
6.5 Engage with the Dept of Justice and IHREC under the Public Sector Duty Reporting	6.5 RCSI meets Public Sector Duty reporting requirements	2021 – 2022
6.6 Partner with business and industry leaders on EDI initiatives	6.6 Partnership with external business and industry stakeholders working in the EDI sphere	2018 - 2022



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