



# Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery

## Equality Scheme 2022 -2029

Draft for public consultation

MARCH 2024

## Context

In this consultation paper, the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (the Commission) seeks feedback on its Equality Scheme. The feedback received will inform the approach the Commission will take to embedding inclusivity and accessibility in all that it does.

## Audience

This paper will be of interest to victims, survivors and families who have been impacted directly or indirectly by the Troubles, particularly in Northern Ireland, Great Britain, and Ireland. There may also be interest from victim and survivor representative bodies, both statutory and voluntary, and the wider population.

## Reconciliation as primary objective

Reconciliation is the principal objective of the Commission. By contributing to this consultation, you will help improve how the Commission delivers for all those across the community.

## Reason for consultation

The Commission has set out as a principle that it should focus on providing useful information to those affected by the Troubles. There is wide flexibility about how this Commission is designed and how it can support individuals, embedding a trauma-informed approach and supporting all individuals to engage with and benefit from the work of the Commission. Through this consultation, the Commission is seeking feedback from the public about its Equality Scheme.

# **Equality Scheme for the Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR)**

**Drawn up in accordance with Section 75 of and Schedule 9 to the  
Northern Ireland Act 1998**

**This document is available in a range of formats on request.  
Please contact us with your requirements:**

**Post:** Freepost ICRIR

**Email:** [equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk)

<b>Address: Freepost ICRIR</b>
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# Foreword

In building this Commission to undertake information recovery and promote reconciliation, the Commissioners have agreed that in addition to following a trauma-informed approach, there should be three essential principles to the Commission's work:

- compliance with the ECHR;
- respect for the principles of the 1998 Belfast Good Friday Agreement; and
- focus on providing useful information to those affected by the Troubles.

The requirements of section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (for public authorities to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between nine equality categories and to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group) are complementary to, and work effectively with, the aspirations of the Commission for how it carries out its mission.

Aligned with our core values of integrity, impartiality, openness, accountability, and respect, it is paramount that we also cultivate an inclusive and diverse organisation that listens to and understands the people it serves. This Equality Scheme sets out the work that the Commission will take which puts these words into action.

This Scheme is subject to consultation so that we can hear and reflect feedback and comments on our proposals before finalising the scheme. I would encourage everyone to respond with their views.



**Sir Declan Morgan**  
Chief Commissioner

March 2024

# Executive Summary

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Act<sup>1</sup>.

In our Equality Scheme, we set out how ICRIR proposes to fulfil the Section 75 statutory duties.

We will commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time, and money to make sure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that the Equality Scheme is implemented. The actions will be embedded within our organisation-wide Annual Work Plan and progress be reported on regularly.

We commit to having effective internal arrangements in place for ensuring our effective compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties and for monitoring and reviewing our progress, including considering what activity to change or add to.

We will develop and deliver a programme of communication and training with the aim of ensuring that all our staff and Board members are made aware of our Equality Scheme and understand the commitments and obligations within it. We will also ensure that those we work with or who may have an interest in using the Commission's services are aware of our commitment to equality and of our Equality Scheme.

As Chief Executive Officer and Commissioner, on behalf of the whole Commission, I can confirm that we are committed to fulfilling our Section 75 statutory duties across all our functions (including service provision, employment, and procurement) through implementation of our Equality Scheme.

We recognise the important role that the community and voluntary sector and the general public have to play to ensure the Section 75 statutory duties are effectively implemented. Our Equality Scheme demonstrates how determined we are to ensure there are opportunities for people affected by our work to positively influence how we carry out our functions in line with our Section 75 statutory duties. It also offers the means whereby persons directly affected by what they consider to be a failure on our part to comply with our Equality Scheme can make a complaint. Learning from mistakes is an important part of doing a better job in the future to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

**Tristan Pedelty**

Chief Executive Officer & Commissioner

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<sup>1</sup> See section 1.1 of our Equality Scheme.

# Chapter 1 Introduction

## Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998

1.1 Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) requires ICRIR to comply with two statutory duties:

### Section 75 (1)

In carrying out our functions relating to Northern Ireland, we are required to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

- persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status, or sexual orientation;
- men and women generally;
- persons with a disability and persons without;
- persons with dependants and persons without.

### Section 75 (2)

In addition, without prejudice to the obligations above, in carrying out our functions in relation to Northern Ireland we are required to have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

“Functions” include the “powers and duties” of a public authority<sup>2</sup>. This includes our employment and procurement functions.

Please see below under ‘Who we are and what we do’ for a detailed explanation of our functions.

## How we propose to fulfil the Section 75 duties in relation to the relevant functions of ICRIR

1.2 Paragraph 4(1) of Schedule 9 to the Act requires ICRIR as a designated public authority to set out in an Equality Scheme how it proposes to fulfil the duties imposed by Section 75 in relation to its relevant functions. This Equality Scheme is intended to fulfil that statutory requirement. It is both a statement of our arrangements for fulfilling the Section 75 statutory duties and our plan for their implementation.

1.3 We at ICRIR are committed to the discharge of our Section 75 obligations in all parts of our organisation and we will commit the necessary resources in terms of people, time, and money to ensure that the Section 75 statutory duties are complied with and that our Equality Scheme can be implemented effectively.

## Who we are and what we do

1.4 The Independent Commission for Reconciliation and Information Recovery (ICRIR) will provide information to victims, survivors and their families about Troubles-related deaths and serious injury and promote reconciliation. We are an independent public authority, set up by statute.

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<sup>2</sup> Section 98 (1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.



1.5 In addition to following our principal objective to promote reconciliation, and our commitment to operate in a trauma-informed manner, ICRIR's Board has agreed three essential principles to the Commission's approach:

- compliance with the ECHR;
- respect for the principles of the 1998 Belfast Good Friday Agreement; and
- focus on providing useful information to those affected by the Troubles.

1.6 Further information about how we will operate will be set out following the commencement of our powers from the summer of 2024. Our statutory functions are set out in the Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023.

## **Chapter 2 Our arrangements for assessing our compliance with the section 75 duties.**

### **(Schedule 9 4. (2)(a))**

2.1 ICRIR's arrangements for assessing compliance with the Section 75 statutory duties are outlined in this Equality Scheme.

2.2 ICRIR became designated in December 2023. This is the Commission's draft Equality Scheme, on which it is consulting. Responses to the consultation will be considered and reflected in an updated Equality Scheme to be adopted by the Commission.

2.3 We are committed to fulfilling our Section 75 obligations in the discharge of all our functions. Responsibility for the effective implementation of our Equality Scheme lies with everyone in the Commission. The Executive Committee and the Chief Executive Officer are accountable for the development, implementation, maintenance, and review of the Equality Scheme in accordance with Section 75 of, and Schedule 9 to, the Northern Ireland Act 1998, including any good practice that has been or may be issued by the Equality Commission Northern Ireland. The Chief Executive Officer, as Accounting Officer, has ultimate responsibility for our Equality Scheme. The Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance will ensure specific expertise is available to the Commission to provide expert advice, to support the work of the Executive Committee as set out above.

2.4 Objectives, milestones and targets relating to the statutory duties will be integrated into our Annual Work Plan and reflected in roles and responsibilities for relevant staff.

2.5 As part of wider integrated performance monitoring, the Executive Committee and the Board will monitor progress to implement actions we have committed to, as well as wider metrics to understand our overall implementation of Section 75 statutory duties.

2.6 As part of our Annual Progress Report (APR), we will set out the progress we have made on implementing the statutory duties and section 49A of the Disability Discrimination (NI) Order 2006. This will be provided to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and made public as part of our wider publication and promotion of our APR.

2.7 If you have any questions or comments regarding our Equality Scheme or on reporting on progress, please contact us:

**Post:** Freepost ICRIR

**Email:** [equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk)

2.8 We will liaise closely with the Equality Commission to ensure that progress on the implementation of our Equality Scheme is maintained.

## Action plan/action measures

2.9 We have developed an initial set of measures to promote equality of opportunity and good relations (Appendix 4). These measures include undertaking an audit of inequalities and using that to inform the development of an action plan, relevant to our functions.

2.10 During our first two years of taking cases, we will carry out an audit of inequalities. The audit of inequalities will gather and analyse information across the Section 75 categories<sup>3</sup> to identify the inequalities that exist for those who interact with the Commission and those affected by our policies<sup>4</sup>.

2.11 Following this audit, we will develop an action plan to reflect any areas identified by the audit. Action measures will be specific, measurable, linked to achievable outcomes, realistic and timebound. Action measures will include performance indicators and timescales for their achievement.

2.12 We will develop any action plans for a period of between one and five years in order to align them with our business planning cycles. Implementation of the action measures will be incorporated into our business planning process.

2.13 We will seek input from our stakeholders and consult on our action plan before we send it to the Equality Commission and thereafter when reviewing the plan.

2.14 We will monitor our progress on the delivery of our action measures annually and update the action plan as necessary to ensure that it remains effective and relevant to our functions and work.

2.15 ICRIR will inform the Equalities Commission of any changes or amendments to our action plan and will also include this information in our Annual Report as set out above at paragraph 2.6.

2.16 Once finalised, our action plan will be available at:

[icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/](https://icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/)

If you require it in an alternative format, please contact us on:

**Post:** Freepost ICRIR

**Email:** [equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk)

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<sup>3</sup> See section 1.1 of this Equality Scheme for a list of these categories.

<sup>4</sup> See section 4.1 of this Equality Scheme for a definition of policies.

## Chapter 3 Our arrangements for consulting

**(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4. (2)(a)) – on matters to which a duty under S75 (1) or (2) is likely to be relevant (including details of the persons to be consulted)**

**(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4. (2)(b)) – on the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted by us on the promotion of equality of opportunity**

3.1 We recognise the importance of consultation in all aspects of the implementation of our statutory equality duties. We will consult on our Equality Scheme, action measures, equality impact assessments and other matters relevant to the Section 75 statutory duties.

3.2 We are committed to carrying out such consultation in accordance with the following principles (as contained in the Equality Commission's guidance *Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities (April 2010)*).

3.2.1 Consultations will seek the views of those directly affected by the matter/policy, the Equality Commission, representative groups of Section 75 categories, other public authorities, voluntary and community groups, our staff and other groups who have a legitimate interest in the matter, whether or not they have a direct economic or personal interest.

3.2.2 Initially, all consultees (see Appendix 3) as a matter of course will be notified through our website about the matter/policy being consulted on. Thereafter, to ensure the most effective use of our and our consultees' resources, we will take a targeted approach to consultation for those consultees that may have a particular interest in the matter/policy being consulted upon and to whom the matter/policy is of particular relevance. This may include, for example, regional or local consultations or sectoral or thematic consultation.

3.2.3 Consultation with all stakeholders will begin as early as possible. We will engage with affected individuals and representative groups to identify how best to consult or engage with them. We will ask our consultees what their preferred consultation methods are and will give consideration to these. Methods of consultation could include:

- face-to-face meetings;
- focus groups;
- written documents with the opportunity to comment in writing;
- questionnaires;
- information/notification by email with an opportunity to opt in/opt out of the consultation;
- social media; or
- telephone consultations.

This list is not exhaustive, and we may develop other additional methods of consultation more appropriate to key stakeholders and the matter being consulted on.

3.2.4 We will consider the accessibility and format of every method of consultation we use in order to remove barriers to the consultation process. Specific consideration will be given as to how best to communicate with children and young people, people with disabilities (in particular people with learning disabilities), disadvantaged communities and minority ethnic groups. We take account of existing and developing good practice, including the Equality Commission's guidance *Let's Talk Let's Listen – Guidance for public authorities on consulting and involving children and young people* (2008).

3.2.5 ICRIR's approach to consultation on the implementation of our statutory equality duties is aimed at ensuring inclusivity, accessibility, and effectiveness in engaging with all stakeholders. In particular, we need to consider the mechanism and means of communicating with those with disabilities and those living with the impact of trauma.

3.2.6 Information will be made available on request in alternative formats<sup>5</sup> as quickly as possible. We will ensure that such consultees have appropriate time to respond.

3.2.7 In summary, to ensure effective consultation with consultees<sup>6</sup> on the Section 75 statutory duties and the commitments in our Equality Scheme, we will raise awareness through the following approach.

### **Clear communication**

- We will provide clear and concise information to consultees about the matter or policy being consulted upon.
- We will ensure information is communicated in accessible language and in alternative formats, when requested, to cater to the diverse needs of consultees.

### **Notification**

- We will ensure that initially all potential consultees are notified of the consultation process through our website.
- We will ensure consultees are informed of the consultation period, deadlines for submission of feedback and how they can participate.

### **Targeted consultation**

- To ensure the most effective use of resources, we will adopt a targeted approach to consultation. This will involve identifying consultees who may have a particular interest in the matter or policy and tailoring consultation approaches accordingly.

### **Consultation methods**

- We will offer multiple methods of consultation to accommodate different preferences and needs of consultees.

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<sup>5</sup> See Chapter 6 of our Equality Scheme for further information on alternative formats of information we provide.

<sup>6</sup> Please see Appendix 3 for a list of our consultees.

3.2.8 ICRIR is committed to consultation periods lasting for 12 weeks, where possible. However, in exceptional circumstances when this timescale is not feasible, we may have a shorter consultation period. We may continue consultation thereafter and will review the policy as part of our monitoring commitments<sup>7</sup>. In exceptional circumstances, we may consult after implementation of the policy, in order to ensure that any impacts of the policy are considered.

3.2.9 We will make relevant information available to consultees in appropriate formats to ensure meaningful consultation. This includes detailed information on the policy proposal being consulted on and any relevant quantitative and qualitative data.

3.2.10 In making any decision with respect to a policy adopted or proposed to be adopted, we will take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy.

3.2.11 We will provide feedback to consultees in a timely manner. A feedback report will be prepared which includes summary information on the policy consulted upon, a summary of consultees' comments and a summary of our consideration of and response to consultees' input. Feedback will be provided in formats suitable to consultees.

3.3 A list of our consultees is included in this Equality Scheme at Appendix 3. It can also be obtained by contacting:

**Post:** Freepost ICRIR

**Email:** [equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk)

3.4 Our consultation list is not exhaustive and is reviewed on an annual basis to ensure it remains relevant to our functions and policies.

We welcome enquiries from any person/s or organisations who would like to be added to the list of consultees. Please contact [equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk) to provide your contact details and have your areas of interest noted or to have your name/details removed or amended. Please also inform us at this stage if you would like information sent to you in a particular format or language.

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<sup>7</sup> Please see below at 4.27 to 4.31 for details on monitoring.

## Chapter 4 Our arrangements for assessing, monitoring, and publishing the impact of policies

(Schedule 9, Paragraphs 4. (2)(b), 4. (2)(c); 4. (2)(d); 9(1); 9(2))

### Our arrangements for assessing the likely impact of policies adopted or proposed to be adopted on the promotion of equality of opportunity (Schedule 9, Paragraph 4. (2) (b))

4.1 In the context of Section 75, ‘policy’ is very broadly defined, and it covers all of the functions of the ICRIIR in relation to Northern Ireland and any general approach that is set out about how ICRIIR proposes to consider the exercise of its powers and statutory responsibilities. ICRIIR is committed to ensuring that substantive changes to our section 75 policy will be consulted upon as well as ensuring that due consideration is given to what other aspects of policy relating to ICRIIR functions and powers are subject to consultation or other forms of public and expert input.

4.2 In making decisions to adopted or modify a policy (as above), we will take into account any assessment and consultation carried out in relation to the policy, as required by paragraph 9(2) of Schedule 9 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

4.3 ICRIIR uses the tools of **screening** and **equality impact assessment** to assess the likely impact of a policy on the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations. In carrying out these assessments, we will relate them to the intended outcomes of the policy in question and will also follow Equality Commission guidance:

- on screening, including the screening template, as detailed in the Commission’s guidance *Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 – A Guide for Public Authorities* (April 2010) and;
- on undertaking an equality impact assessment, as detailed in the Commission’s guidance *Practical guidance on equality impact assessment* (February 2005); and
- *Effective Section 75 Equality Assessments: Screening and Equality Assessments* (2017).

### Screening

4.4 The purpose of screening is to identify policies that are likely to have an impact on equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

4.5 Screening is completed at the earliest opportunity in the policy development/review process. Policies which we propose to adopt will be subject to screening prior to implementation. For more detailed strategies or policies that are to be put in place through a series of stages, we will screen at stages during implementation.

4.6 The lead role in the screening of a policy is taken by the policy decision-maker who has the authority to make changes to that policy. However, screening will also involve other relevant input, for example from those with equality expertise, those who implement the policy and staff members from other relevant work areas.

4.7 The following questions are applied to all our policies as part of the screening process:

- What is the likely impact on equality of opportunity for those affected by this policy, for each of the Section 75 equality categories? (minor/major/none)
- Are there opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity for people within the Section 75 equality categories?
- To what extent is the policy likely to impact on good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group? (minor/major/none)
- Are there opportunities to better promote good relations between people of a different religious belief, political opinion, or racial group?

4.8 In order to answer the screening questions, we use existing data sets or, where appropriate and feasible, gather relevant information and data, both qualitative and quantitative. In taking this evidence into account, we consider the different needs, experiences, and priorities for each of the Section 75 equality categories. Any screening decision will be informed by this evidence.

4.9 Completion of screening, taking into account our consideration of the answers to all four screening questions set out in 4.7 above, will lead to one of the following three outcomes:

1. The policy has been 'screened in' for equality impact assessment.
2. The policy has been 'screened out' with mitigation<sup>8</sup> or an alternative policy has been proposed for adoption.
3. The policy has been 'screened out' without mitigation or an alternative policy has been proposed for adoption.

4.10 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'minor' in respect of one or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may on occasion decide not to proceed with an equality impact assessment (EQIA), depending on the policy. If an EQIA is not to be conducted, we will nonetheless consider measures that might mitigate the policy impact as well as alternative policies that might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity and/or good relations.

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<sup>8</sup> Mitigation – Where an assessment (screening in this case) reveals that a particular policy has an adverse impact on equality of opportunity and / or good relations, a public authority must consider ways of delivering the policy outcomes which have a less adverse effect on the relevant Section 75 categories.



Where we mitigate, we will outline in our screening template the reasons to support this decision, together with the proposed changes, amendments or alternative policy.

This screening decision will be signed off by the appropriate policy lead within the Commission.

4.11 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'major' in respect of one or more of the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we will normally subject the policy to an equality impact assessment. This screening decision will be signed off by the appropriate policy lead within the Commission.

4.12 If our screening concludes that the likely impact of a policy is 'none' in respect of all the equality of opportunity and/or good relations categories, we may decide to screen the policy out. If a policy is 'screened out' as having no relevance to equality of opportunity or good relations, we will give details of the reasons for the decision taken. This screening decision will be signed off by the appropriate policy lead within the Commission.

4.13 As soon as possible following the completion of the screening process, the screening template, signed off and approved by the Executive Committee member responsible for the policy, will be made available on our website:

[icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/](http://icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/)

and on request:

**Post:** Freepost ICRIIR

**Email:** [equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk)

4.14 If a consultee, including the Equality Commission Northern Ireland, raises a concern about a screening decision based on supporting evidence, we will review the screening decision.

4.15 Our screening reports will be published quarterly.

## **Equality impact assessment**

4.16 An equality impact assessment (EQIA) is a thorough and systematic analysis of a policy, whether that policy is formal or informal and irrespective of the scope of that policy. The primary function of an EQIA is to determine the extent of any impact of a policy on the Section 75 categories and to determine if the impact is an adverse one. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate the likely positive outcomes of a policy and to seek ways to promote equality of opportunity and good relations more effectively.

4.17 Once a policy is screened and screening has identified that an equality impact assessment is necessary, we will carry out the EQIA in accordance with Equality Commission guidance. The equality impact assessment will be carried out as part of the policy development process before the policy is implemented.

4.18 Any equality impact assessment will be subject to consultation at the appropriate stage(s). (For details see above Chapter 3 Our Arrangements for Consulting.)

**Our arrangements for publishing the results of the assessments of the likely impact of policies we have adopted or propose to adopt on the promotion of equality of opportunity – (Schedule 9, paragraphs 4. (2)(d) and 9(1))**

4.19 We will make publicly available the results of our assessments (screening and EQIA).

**What we publish**

**4.20 Screening reports**

These will be published quarterly. Screening reports detail:

- All policies screened by ICRIR over the three-month period.
- A statement of the aim(s) of the policy/policies to which the assessment relates.
- Consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact.
- Consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Screening decisions, i.e.:
  - whether the policy has been ‘screened in’ for equality impact assessment;
  - whether the policy has been ‘screened out’ with mitigation or an alternative policy has been proposed for adoption;
  - whether the policy has been ‘screened out’ without mitigation or an alternative policy has been proposed for adoption.
- Where applicable, a timetable for conducting equality impact assessments.
- A link to the completed screening template(s) on our website.

**4.21 Screening templates**

For details on the availability of our screening templates, please refer to 4.13.

**4.22 Equality impact assessments**

EQIA reports will be published once the impact assessment has been completed. These reports will include:

- a statement of the aim of the policy assessed;
- information and data collected;
- details of the assessment of impact(s);
- consideration given to measures which might mitigate any adverse impact;
- consideration given to alternative policies which might better achieve the promotion of equality of opportunity;
- consultation responses;
- the decision taken;
- future monitoring plans.

## **How we publish the information**

4.23 All information we publish will be accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request. Please see 6.3 below.

## **Where we publish the information**

4.24 The results of our assessments (screening reports and completed templates, the results of equality impact assessments) will be available on our website:

[icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/](https://icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/)

and by contacting:

**Post:** Freepost ICRIR

**Email:** [equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk)

4.25 We will inform the general public about the availability of this material through communications such as press releases where appropriate.

## **Our arrangements for monitoring any adverse impact of policies we have adopted on equality of opportunity** (Schedule 9, Paragraph 4(2)(c))

The Commission will have comprehensive arrangements in place to collect and analyse both quantitative and qualitative information to monitor our equality and diversity efforts.

### **Data collection**

We will collect quantitative data on various equality indicators, such as demographic information (age, gender, ethnicity, disability status), employment statistics, and outcomes.

Data collection methods may include surveys, administrative records, monitoring forms, and other relevant sources.

### **Qualitative feedback**

In addition to quantitative data, we will gather qualitative feedback from stakeholders, including staff, service users, and community groups.

Qualitative information may be collected through interviews, focus groups, feedback forms, and consultation processes.

### **Monitoring schedule**

We will adhere to a monitoring schedule that includes regular reviews of both quantitative and qualitative information.

As recommended by the Equality Commission, we will undertake at least an annual review of Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) monitoring information to assess any adverse impacts and identify opportunities for improvement. Additionally, all other monitoring information will be reviewed on a regular basis to track progress, identify trends, and inform decision-making.

### **Action planning**

Based on the findings from monitoring and analysis, action plans will be developed to address any identified gaps, challenges, or opportunities.

Action plans may include specific strategies, objectives, and timelines for implementing targeted interventions to promote equality of opportunity and good relations.

### **Continuous improvement**

We will adopt a culture of continuous improvement, regularly evaluating the effectiveness of our monitoring arrangements and adjusting as needed. Feedback from stakeholders and lessons learned from monitoring activities will be used to inform enhancements to our monitoring processes over time.

4.26 Monitoring can assist us to deliver better public services and continuous improvements. Monitoring Section 75 information involves the processing of sensitive personal data (data relating to the racial or ethnic origin of individuals, sexual orientation, political opinion, religious belief, etc). In order to carry out monitoring in a confidential and effective manner, ICRIR will follow guidance from the Information Commissioner's Office and the Equality Commission.

4.27 We will monitor any adverse impact on the promotion of equality of opportunity of policies we have adopted. We are also committed to monitoring more broadly to identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations in line with Equality Commission guidance.

4.28 The systems we have established to monitor the impact of policies and identify opportunities to better promote equality of opportunity and good relations are:

- The collection, collation, and analysis of existing relevant primary quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis.
- The collection, collation and analysis of existing relevant secondary sources of quantitative and qualitative data across all nine equality categories on an ongoing basis.
- An audit of existing information systems within one year of approval of this Equality Scheme, to identify the extent of current monitoring and take action to address any gaps in order to have the necessary information on which to base decisions.
- Undertaking or commissioning new data if necessary.

4.29 If over a two-year period monitoring and evaluation show that a policy results in greater adverse impact than predicted, or if opportunities arose which would allow for greater equality of opportunity to be promoted, we will ensure that the policy is revised to achieve better outcomes for relevant equality groups.

4.30 We review our EQIA monitoring information on an annual basis.

**Our arrangements for publishing the results of our monitoring.**  
(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4. (2) (d))

4.31 Paragraph 4(2)(d) of Schedule 9 requires us to publish the results of the monitoring of adverse impacts of policies we have adopted. However, we are committed to monitoring more broadly. EQIA monitoring information is published as part of our Section 75 annual progress report. All information published will be accessible and can be made available in alternative formats on request.

# **Chapter 5 Staff training**

(Schedule 9, Paragraph 4(2) (e))

## **Commitment to staff training**

5.1 We recognise that awareness-raising and training play a crucial role in the effective implementation of our Section 75 duties.

5.2 We wish to positively communicate the commitment of ICRIR to the Section 75 statutory duties, both internally and externally. We are introducing a communication and training programme for all staff, starting with induction into this new organisation and then regularly refreshing knowledge and understanding.

## **Training objectives**

5.3 We are developing a training plan for our staff which will aim to achieve the following objectives:

- To raise awareness of the provisions of Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, our Equality Scheme commitments and the particular issues likely to affect people across the range of Section 75 categories, to ensure that our staff fully understand their role in implementing the scheme.
- To provide staff involved in the assessment of policies (screening and EQIA) with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.
- To provide staff who deal with complaints in relation to compliance with our Equality Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to investigate and monitor complaints effectively.
- To provide staff involved in consultation processes with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.
- To provide staff involved in the implementation and monitoring of the effective implementation of ICRIR's Equality Scheme with the necessary skills and knowledge to do this work effectively.

## **Awareness-raising and training arrangements**

5.4 The following arrangements will be in place to ensure all our staff and board members are aware of and understand our equality obligations.

- We will develop a summary of this Equality Scheme and make it available to all staff.
- We will provide access to copies of the full Equality Scheme for all staff and ensure that any queries or questions of clarification from staff are addressed effectively.
- Staff in ICRIR will receive a briefing on this Equality Scheme as part of their induction to the organisation.
- The Section 75 statutory duties will also form part of induction training for new staff.
- Focused training will be provided for key staff within ICRIR who are directly engaged in taking forward the implementation of our Equality

Scheme commitments (for example those involved in research and data collection, policy development, service design, conducting equality impact assessments, consultation, monitoring, and evaluation).

- Where appropriate, training will be provided to ensure staff are aware of the issues experienced by the range of Section 75 groups.
- When appropriate and on an ongoing basis, arrangements will be made to ensure staff are kept up to date with Section 75 developments.

5.5 Training and awareness raising programmes will, where relevant, be developed in association with the appropriate Section 75 groups and our staff.

## **Monitoring and evaluation**

5.6 Our training programme will be subject to the following monitoring and evaluation arrangements:

- We will evaluate the extent to which all participants in this training programme have acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to achieve each of the above objectives.
- The extent to which training objectives have been met will be reported on as part of our annual reporting, which will be sent to the Equality Commission.

## **Chapter 6 Our arrangements for ensuring and assessing public access to information and services we provide**

(Schedule 9 paragraph 4. (2)(f))

6.1 We are committed to ensuring that the information we disseminate and the services we provide are fully accessible to all parts of the community in Northern Ireland. We will keep our arrangements under review to ensure that this remains the case.

6.2 We are aware that some groups will not have the same access to information as others.

In particular:

- People with sensory, learning, communication and mobility disabilities may require printed information in other formats.
- Members of ethnic minority groups, whose first language is not English, may have difficulties with information provided only in English.
- Children and young people may not be able to fully access or understand information.
- People whose physical location restricts their access e.g. those in rural areas, may not be able to fully access information.
- People without access to a computer will not be able to access internet-based dissemination.

### **Access to information**

6.3 To ensure equality of opportunity in accessing information, we will provide information in alternative formats on request, where reasonably practicable. Where the exact request cannot be met, we will ensure a reasonable alternative is provided.

6.4 Alternative formats may include Easy Read, Braille, audio formats or large print. We will respond to requests for information in alternative formats as quickly as possible.

6.5 For providing information to children and young people, people with learning disabilities, and minority ethnic communities, we will arrange the following:

### **Tailored communication**

6.6 For people with learning disabilities and mental health conditions, we will provide simplified language and clear layouts.



### **Language access**

6.7 Translation and interpretation services will be available to overcome language barriers. Materials will be provided in alternative languages, where requested.

6.8 In disseminating information, we will seek to use a range of media channels to reflect the differing needs and preferences of different groups.

### **Access to services**

6.9 We are committed to ensuring that all of our services are fully accessible to everyone in the community across the Section 75 categories. The Commission also adheres to the relevant provisions of current anti-discrimination legislation.

6.10 Specific arrangements we will have in place to ensure public access to our services include the following:

#### **Accessibility assessments**

6.11 We will conduct regular accessibility assessments of our facilities, including buildings, websites and service delivery points to identify barriers to access.

#### **Physical accessibility**

6.12 We will ensure that our physical facilities are designed and equipped to accommodate individuals with mobility impairments.

#### **Digital accessibility**

6.13 Our website and online platforms will be designed to be accessible to individuals with disabilities, including those using screen readers or assistive technologies.

#### **Alternative communication methods**

6.14 We will provide alternative communication methods for individuals who may have difficulty accessing our services through traditional channels.

### **Language access**

6.15 Translation and interpretation services will be available to assist individuals who require language support to access our services.

#### **Feedback mechanisms**

6.16 Feedback will be actively sought and used to inform continuous improvement efforts and address any identified barriers or challenges.

## **Chapter 7 Timetable for measures we propose in this Equality Scheme**

(Schedule 9 Paragraph 4. (3)(b))

7.1 Appendix 4 outlines our timetable for all measures proposed within this Equality Scheme. The measures outlined in this timetable will be incorporated into our Annual Workplan.

7.2 This timetable is different from and in addition to our commitment to developing action plans/action measures to specifically address inequalities and further promote equality of opportunity and good relations. We have included in our Equality Scheme a commitment to develop an action plan. Accordingly, this commitment is listed in the timetable of measures at Appendix 4.

## Chapter 8 Our complaints procedure

(s10 of Schedule 9)

8.1 ICRIR will be responsive to the views of members of the public. We will endeavour to resolve all complaints made to us.

8.2 A person can make a complaint to a public authority if they believe they may have been directly affected by an alleged failure of the authority to comply with its approved Equality Scheme. If the complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timescale, the complaint can be brought to the Equality Commission.

8.3 A person wishing to make a complaint that ICRIR has failed to comply with its approved Equality Scheme should use the ICRIR's dedicated complaints process to raise the issue:

- **by email at:** [complaints@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:complaints@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk)
- **in writing at:** Freepost ICRIR; or
- **in person:** by making an appointment using the contact details provided above.

8.4 We will handle such a complaint under our wider complaints handling procedures and will respond to acknowledge the complaint and how it is being handled within 3 to 5 working days.

8.5 An internal investigation of the complaint will be carried out by the Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance, or an appropriately qualified staff member on their behalf. We will respond substantively to the complainant within one (1) month of the date of receiving the complaint. Under certain circumstances, if the complexity of the matter requires more time, this may be extended to two (2) months. In those circumstances, the complainant will be advised of the extended period within one month of making the complaint.

8.6 During this process, the complainant will be kept fully informed of the progress of the investigation into the complaint and of any outcomes.

8.7 If a complaint has not been resolved within a reasonable timescale, the complaint can be taken to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland and the Commission will co-operate fully in any subsequent investigation, in line with its legal duties.

8.8 The Commission will make all efforts to implement promptly and in full any recommendations arising out of any Equality Commission for Northern Ireland investigation.

# Chapter 9 Publication of our Equality Scheme

(Schedule 9 paragraph 4(3)(c))

9.1 Our Equality Scheme will be available free of charge in print form and alternative formats from:

**Post:** Freepost ICRIR

**Email:** [equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk)

9.2 Our Equality Scheme will also be available on our website at:

[icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/](http://icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/)

9.3 The following arrangements will be in place for the publication of our Equality Scheme to ensure equality of access.

- We will make every effort to communicate widely the existence and content of our Equality Scheme. This may include the media, the internet and direct mailshots to groups representing the various categories in Section 75.
- We will respond to requests for the Equality Scheme in alternative formats in a timely manner, usually within 20 working days.
- Our Equality Scheme will be available on request in alternative formats such as Easy Read, Braille, large print, audio formats and in alternative languages.
- The arrangements we will have in place for effectively communicating our Equality Scheme to children and young people, as well as people with disabilities will be:
  - **Accessible communication materials** For people with disabilities, we will provide alternative formats such as large print, Braille, or audio recordings to ensure accessibility for those with visual impairments.
  - **Accessible digital platforms** Information about our Equality Scheme will be made available on our website and digital platforms in formats that are accessible to people with disabilities.
  - **Feedback mechanisms** Feedback will be actively sought and used to improve the accessibility and effectiveness of our communication efforts.

9.4 For a list of our stakeholders and consultees, please see Appendix 3 of the Equality Scheme, visit our website at [icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/](http://icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/) or contact:

**Post:** Freepost ICRIR

**Email:** [equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk)

## **Chapter 10 Review of our Equality Scheme**

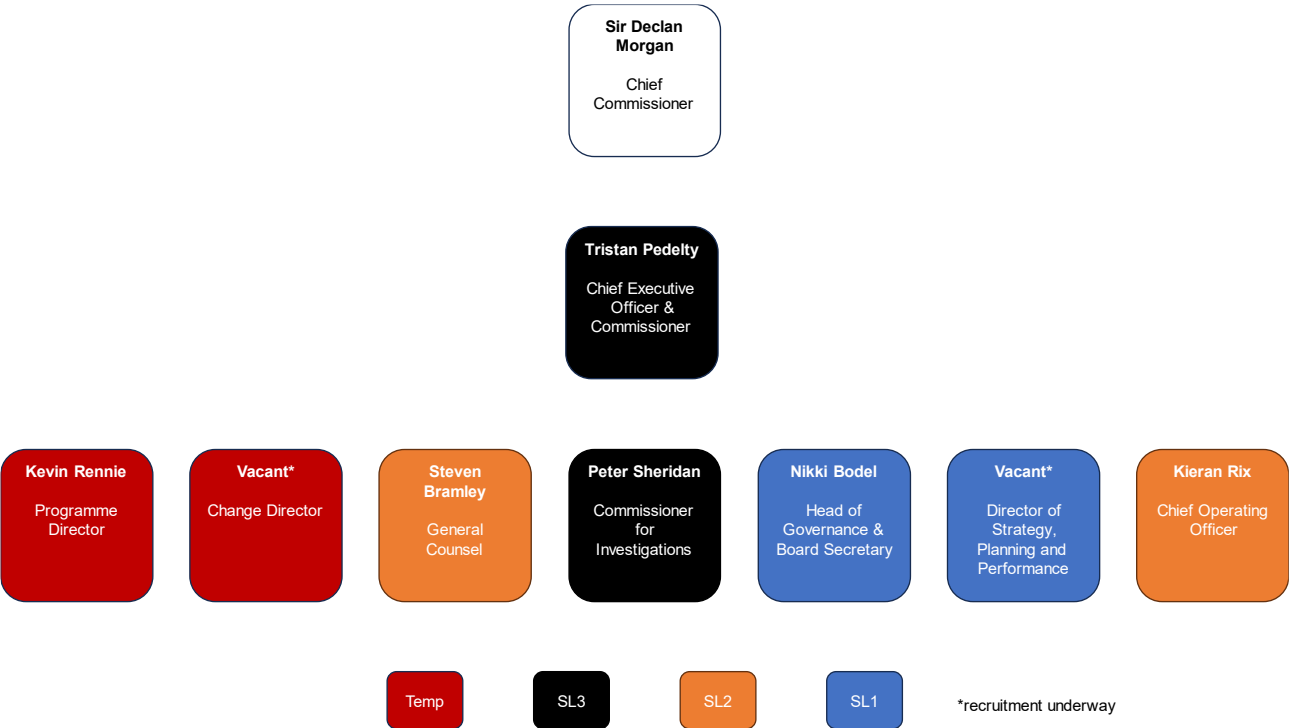
(Schedule 9, paragraph 8(3))

10.1 We will conduct a review of this Equality Scheme within five years of submitting the Scheme to the Equality Commission or within a shorter timescale to allow alignment with the review of other planning cycles.

The review will evaluate the effectiveness of our scheme in relation to the implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties relevant to our functions in Northern Ireland.

10.2 In undertaking this review, we will follow any guidance issued by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. A report of this review will be made public on our website: [icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/](http://icrir.independent-inquiry.uk/) and sent to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

# Appendix 1      Organisation chart



## Appendix 2

## Example groups relevant to the Section 75 categories for Northern Ireland purposes.

***Please note, this list is for illustration purposes only, it is not exhaustive.***

Category	Example groups
Religious belief	<p>Buddhist; Catholic; Hindu; Jewish; Muslim; people of no religious belief; Protestant; Sikh; other faiths.</p> <p>For the purposes of Section 75, the term “religious belief” is the same definition as that used in the <i>Fair Employment &amp; Treatment (NI) Order</i><sup>9</sup>. Therefore, “religious belief” also includes any <i>perceived</i> religious belief (or perceived lack of belief) and, in employment situations only, it also covers any “<i>similar philosophical belief</i>”.</p>
Political opinion <sup>10</sup>	Nationalist generally; Unionist generally; members/supporters of other political parties.
Racial group	Black people; Chinese; Indian; Pakistani; people of mixed ethnic background; Polish; Roma; Member of the Travelling Community; White people.
Men and women generally	Men (including boys); Transgender people; Transsexual people; women (including girls).
Marital status	Civil partners or people in civil partnerships; divorced people; married people; separated people; single people; widowed people.
Age	Children and young people; older people.
Persons with a disability	Persons with disabilities as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.
Persons with dependants	Persons with personal responsibility for the care of a child; for the care of a person with a disability; or the care of a dependant older person.
Sexual orientation	LGBTQIA+

<sup>9</sup> See Section 98 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, which states: “*In this Act...*” *political opinion*” and “*religious belief*” shall be construed in accordance with Article 2(3) and (4) of the *Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998*.”

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*

## Appendix 3 List of consultees

(s2(a) of Schedule 9)

***Please note, this list is for illustration purposes only, it is not exhaustive.***

21 Training	Ashton Centre Development
4 Corners Festival	Association For Real Change NI
5TH ELEMENT NI	Attorney General NI
A Safe Space to Be Me	Autism NI
ABBEY Sure Start	Autonomie
Abbeyfield Belfast Society	AvilaMedia
Access Employment Ltd	Ballybeen Men's Motivational Group
Accolade	Ballyjamesduff Community Creche
Acquired Brain Injury Ireland	Ballymena South Community Cluster
Action MS	Ballymoney Scout Group
Action Trauma	Ballynafeigh Community Development Association
Adopt NI	Balysillan Community Forum
Advanced Community Care	Bangor Alternatives
African And Caribbean Support Organisation Northern Ireland (ACSONI)	Beat The Street (Intelligent Health Ltd)
Age Concern Causeway	Befrienders For Disability
Age NI	Belfast Activity Centre
AGE North Down Ards	Belfast and Lisburn Community Project
Age Sector Platform	Belfast Bible College
Air Ambulance Northern Ireland	Belfast Butterfly Club
Alice Ferguson & Lesley Reilly	Belfast HSC
All MLA's	Belfast Interface Project
All Saints Youth Club	Belfast Recovery College
Alliance	Belfast South Network Company
Altnaveigh House	Belfast Unemployed Resource Centre
Amnesty	Belfast Works LEMIS+ Project
Angel Eyes NI	Belfast YMCA
Anna Clarke, Prospect Community	Belleek Community Carers Group
Antrim Enterprise Agency Ltd	Belvoir Parish Church of Ireland
Antrim Festival Group	Benview Community Centre
APE CRYSTALS	Beyond Skin
Ardaluin Regeneration Trust	Big Ideas
Ardmonagh Family & Community Group	Black Mountain Zen Centre
Ardoyne Association	Bloody Sunday Trust
Ardoyne Women's Group	Bluebird Counselling NI
Ardoyne Youth Enterprise	Body Focused Repetitive Behaviour (BFRB) Network Northern Ireland
Ark Kingdom Ministries Charity	Bogside & Brandywell Health Forum
Armagh Traveller Support Group	Bogside And Brandywell Initiative Limited
Army Operational Legacy (MOD)	Bolster Community
Arts Care	Bounce Culture



Bout Yeh	Children's Research Network for Ireland and Northern Ireland (CRNINI)
Bowel Cancer UK	Christian Aid Ireland
Boys & Girls Clubs (NI)	Church Leaders Group
Brain Injury Matters	Church Mission Society Ireland - CMSI
Breastival	Church of Ireland
Breathe Yoga & Therapies CIC	Circle Of Support (COS) For Autism Families
Bric Programme	City Church Belfast
Brooke House Health and Wellbeing Centre	City Life Projects
Broughshane & District Community Association Limited	Claire Hanna MP
Bruno Groening Circle of Friends	Clan Mor Sure Start
BTRC by Transgender	Clare CIC
Building Communities Resource Centre	Clonoe Community Centre
Cabinet Office Northern Ireland	Coalisland Residents & Community Forum
Camlough Community Association Ltd	COBSEO (The Confederation of Service Charities)
Campaign For a Fair Society	CoG Training
Campaigner	Coiste Na Niarchimí
Camphill Holywood	Coleraine SureStart Partnership
CAN - Compass Advocacy Network Ltd	Colin Glen
Cancer Choices	Colin Sure Start
Canice Consulting Ltd	Commissioner for Public Appointments for Northern Ireland
Cara Friend Helpline	Committee on the Administration of Justice (CAJ)
Cara-Friend LGBT Youth	Community Development Networks Forum
CARE	Community Faiths' Forum
CARE (Christian Action Research & Education)	Community Relations Council
Carn Media	Community Relations in Schools (CRIS)
Carnlough Community Association	Community Sports Network
Castle Hill Foundation	Community Support
Catholic Church in Ireland - St Patrick's Cathedral, Armagh (Roman Catholic)	Community Transport Association
Catholic Guides of Ireland	Community Relations Forum
Causeway Initiative for Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution International	Complete Mind Solutions
Causeway Older Active Strategic Team (COAST)	Connect Christian Counselling Service
Causeway Rural & Urban Network	Connect2Counselling
Cavehill Bowling & Tennis Club	Connected Community Care
Centre For Global Education	Cookstown & District Women's Group
Centre For Independent Living NI	Co-operation Ireland
Centre For Partnership	Co-operation Ireland
Centred Soul	CoP - College of Policing
Ceres Europe (NI) Ltd	Coroner
Chain HR Limited	Corpus Christi Services
Charis Cancer Care Ltd	Counselling All Nations Services (CANS)
Charities Buying Group	CRAICNI
Charity Supporting Victims	Craigavon Travellers Support Committee

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CALMS)	Cromac Regeneration Initiative
Crossfire Trust	Erne East Community Partnership Ltd
Crossmaglen Community Association	Every Life Matters
Cruse Bereavement Care North Down & Ards Area	Extern
Dads 'Do' Matter NI	Extern Works
Dance Associate Ltd	Extra Care
Davina's Ark - Non-Residential Aftercare Addiction Centre	FAIR (Families Acting for Innocent Relatives)
Decorum NI	Families Beyond
Dementia Friendly East Belfast	Families Beyond Conflict
Dementia NI	Families Moving On
Democratic Unionist Party	Family Caring Centre
Derry Adventist	Family Fund
Developing Healthy Communities	Familyworks & Imagine If
Devenish Partnership Forum	Farranshane Community Trust
Dialogue For Diversity	Farset Development Ltd
Disability Action	Federation Of Experts by Experience
Disability Sport NI	Fermanagh Positive Youth Outlooks
Disabled Police Officers' Association N. I	Fermanagh Trust
Diverse Church	Fibromyalgia Awareness Northern Ireland
Diversity Challenges	Fighting Words NI
Diversity NI	Firinne
Donegal Community Workers Co-Operative	First Aid for Churches Training Service
Donegal Youth Service	First Steps Women's Centre
Doury Road Development Group	Flourish NI
Down Community Arts	Focus: The Identity Trust
Down's Syndrome Association	Footprints Women's Centre
Drumbeg North and South Resident Association	Forest Fitness NI
Drumgor Detached Youth Work Project	Former SoS NIs
Dungannon Presbyterian Church	Forthspring Inter Community Group
Dunmurry Community Association	Forward South Partnership
E2A INCLUSIVE THEATRE GROUP	Four Monkeys Media
East Belfast Historical and Cultural Society	Foyle Hospice
East Belfast Mission	Foyle Parents and Friends
Eastern GP Federation Support Unit	Foyle Women's Information Network
Eating Disorders Association (N.I.)	Fresh Minds Education
Edgarstown Residents Association	Friends Forever International - Europe
EduSOIL	Friends of Glenariffe
Eilis O'Hanlon	GamCare
Ely Centre	GenderJam NI
EMBRACE NI	Gifted Project
Emerge Counselling Services	Glenbank Community Association
Empowering Communities	Glenshane Care Association Ltd
Ending the Harm	Good Morning East Antrim
Epilepsy Action Northern Ireland	Greenlight Gateway
Equality & Involvement Office Tyrone and Fermanagh	Greenpower Education Trust

Equality Commission for Northern Ireland - Commissioner	Groundwork NI
Groundwork Northern Ireland	International Expert Panel on State Impunity and the NI Conflict
GROW in North of Ireland	Involve
Growing Connections	Ionad Uíbh Eachach
Growing Together	IOSH Northern Ireland
Guide Dogs NI	Irish Advocacy Network CLG
Guide Dogs Northern Ireland	Irish Council for Civil Liberties
HallTogether	Irish School of Ecumenic
Harmoni	Jennymount Methodist Church
Harmony Community Trust / Glebe House	John and Pat Hume Foundation
Head Injury Support	Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
Headway - The Brain Injury Association	Josie Nugent
Headway Newry	Jubilee
Healing The Land	Justice4the21
Healing Through Remembering	Kabosh
Hearing Dogs for Deaf People	Kilbride Presbyterian Church
Hearing Link	Kilcreggan Homes
Here NI	Kilkeel Parish Bridge Association Limited - The JIMS Project
Hillcrest Trust	Kinship Care Northern Ireland
Historical Institutional Abuse Inquiry (Secretariat)	Kith & Kin Financial Wellbeing - Social Enterprise
HMIC - HM Inspectorate of Constabulary	Knockmore Community Association
Holistic Retreat Centre Embrace	L.A.M. P
Holy Trinity Youth Centre	Labour Party (UK)
Home-Start Lakeland	LACE
Home-Start Lisburn/Colin	Lady Chief Justice NI
Home-Start North Belfast	Lagan Dragons Dragon Boat Club
Home-Start South and East Belfast	Lagan Valley Rural Transport
Hope 4 ME & Fibro Northern Ireland	Larne Community Care Centre
Hope4LifeNI	Larne Foodbank
Hourglass (Formerly Action on Elder Abuse Northern Ireland)	LatinQuarter Dance School
House of Lords	Law Society of Northern Ireland
HSC Trust Southern	LCC Community Trust
Human Health Project	Leafair Community Association
Human Rights Watch - Europe	Learning Disability Pride
ICare Purple Run 12 Of August 2017	Learning Works
ICONI Software	Lenadoon Community Forum / Community Counselling Service
Imagine Belfast Ltd	Lenadoon Women's Group
Impact Training (NI) Ltd	Leonard Cheshire
INCORE	Leukaemia & Lymphoma NI
IncredABLE	Life Ni
Independent MLA	Lighthouse Hostel
Informing Choices NI	Limavady Community Development Initiative (LCDI)
Inishowen Development Partnership	Limitless Adventure Centre

Innate Training	Links Counselling Service
Lisburn Downtown Centre	New Lodge Housing Forum
Lisburn Downtown Centre	Newington Day Centre
Lislea Community Association	Newington Residents Group
Listening Books	Newpin Northern Ireland
Livability UK	Newry And Mourne Fibromyalgia and ME Support Group
Live Active NI	Newtownards Road Women's Group Ltd
Lost Lives - prison officers support group	Nexus
Lough Neagh Development Trust	NHS at 70/University of Manchester
Loughgilly Parish Trust	NI Children's Commissioner
Love Hockey Ireland - The Rink Sports Arena & Multipurpose Centre	NI Muslim Family Association (NIMFA)
Lower Shankill Community Association	NI Veterans Commissioners Office
Magnet Young Adult Centre	NI Veterans Movement
Mainstay DRP	NI Veterans Support Office
Malone House Group	NI Veterans Welfare Service (part of MoD)
Mariner's Afterschool Care	NI WOMEN'S EUROPEAN PLATFORM
McGarry Consulting	NIHACT
ME Support Northern Ireland	North Belfast Interface Network
Mediation Northern Ireland	North Coast Community Transport
Mencap	North Connor Youth Project
Meningitis Research Foundation	North Down & Ards Women's Aid
Men's Action Network (MAN)	North Leitrim Women's Centre
Mental Health Champion Northern Ireland	North South Ministerial Council
Mermaids UK	Northern Area Community Network
Metal For Life NI	Northern Ireland Alcohol and Drug Alliance
Michaela Hollywood	Northern Ireland Alternatives
Mid & East Antrim Agewell Partnership	Northern Ireland Community Energy (NICE) Co-Operative
Migrant Centre NI	Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action (NIVCA)
Migrant Help	Northern Ireland Foundation
Migrant Rights Centre Ireland	Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC)
Military and Police Support West Tyrone (MAPS)	Northern Ireland Phoenix Organisation
Millbrook Church Of the Nazarene	Northern Ireland Psychoanalytic Society
Millisle Youth Forum	Northern Ireland Rare Disease Partnership (NIRDP)
Mind Matter Counselling	Northern Ireland Retired Police Officers Association (NIRPOA)
Mini Me Yoga with Sharon	Office of Social Security Commissioners and Child Support Commissioners
MONEYSLANE AFTER SCHOOL	Omagh Bombing Inquiry
Monkstown Boxing Club	Omagh Police Wives
Monkstown Village Initiatives	Omeath District Development CLG
Mourne Stimulus Limited	Op Courage
Moville And District Family Resource Centre	Open Arts
Music Bridge	Operation Kenova
MYMY - Mind Your Mate and Yourself	Orchardville
National Autistic Society Northern Ireland	Orla McDade Life Therapy & Coaching

National Crime Agency	Out And About Community Transport
National Deaf Children's Society	Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland
Oxfam Ballyhackamore	RUC GC Association County Armagh
PAPYRUS Prevention of Young Suicide	RUC George Cross Foundation
Parent Action CIC	RUCGC /PSNI Benevolent Fund
Parents Education as Autism Therapists	Rugby Cubz NI Community Interest Company
Parkanaur College Thomas Doran Trust	Rural Community Development Support Service
Parkinsons UK Northern Ireland	Rural Community Network
Passing Phase	Rural Support
Pat Finucane Centre	Russian Speaking Community NI
PEAT (Parents Education as Autism Therapists)	Sailortown Regeneration
PIPS Suicide Prevention Ireland	Sandy Row Methodist Church
PlayFit, Fun Fitness for Kids	Schomberg Society
Playtime Day Nursery, Playgroup and Out Of Schools Club	Scotch Street Youth & Community Centre
Police Ombudsman Northern Ireland (PONI)	Scottish Nursing Guild
Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI)	Sense Northern Ireland
Portadown YMCA	Service Business
Portaferry And Strangford Trust	Servite Trust (NI)
Positive Futures	Seymour Hill And Conway Youth Council
Positive Steps Community Centre	Shankill Women's Centre
Possibilities NI	Share Discovery Village
Prehen Lifestyle Center	Shared History Interpretive Project
Presbyterian Church in Ireland	Shared Island Initiative
Pretty N Pink Breast Cancer Charity	Shine NI (Spina Bifida, Hydrocephalus, Information, Networking, Equality)
Prisoners' groups across communities	Shopmobility Belfast
Project Africa Athletics	Shopmobility Lisburn
PRRT	Shopmobility Mid Ulster
Public Prosecution Service Northern Ireland	Short Breaks - Southern Health and Social Care Trust
Pure Mental NI	Short Strand Community Forum
PVN	Sinn Fein
Queens Park Women's Group	Sisters Of St Louis
Queer Space	Skegoneill Glandore Common Purpose
RACE AGAINST MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS (RAMS)	SkyzdalimitOmagh
Rathcoole Churches Community Group	Smith Design Agency
Redbird Counselling and Training Service	Social Democratic Labour Party (SDLP)
Regenerate	Social Farming Across Borders
Regimental Associations	Society Of St Vincent De Paul (SVP)
Regional Trauma Network	Sólás Charity
Rejuvenate Project	Solicitor
Relatives For Justice	Sollus Cultural Promotions
Richmount Rural Community Association	Something Special
Rights and Security International	South & East Tyrone Welfare Support
RNID	South and East Tyrone Welfare Support Group
Road Of Hope	South Antrim Community Network (SACN)
Robert Carr Fund for civil society networks	South East Fermanagh Foundation (SEFF)

Roe Valley Residents Association	South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust
Rosemount House Limited	South Eastern HSC Trust
Rowallane Community Hub	Special Educational Needs Advice Centre
Rowan Centre (SARC)	Special Olympics Ulster
Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB NI)	Specialisterne NI
	Springboard Opportunities Limited
Springhill and Kelly's bar families	The Rainbow Project
Springhill Community House	The Skainos Centre
Stand To	The Speedwell Trust
Steer Training Academy	The Union of Students in Ireland
Stratagem	The United Parish, Of Ballynure & Ballyeaston (Ballyclare)
Strathfoyle Women's Activity Group Ltd	The University of Atypical for Arts and Disability
Strathroy Community Enterprise Ltd	The Villages Together
Stroke Association	The WELL Project
Stronger Together	The Wellcome Trust
Superstars Club Cookstown	The Wider Circle
TAMHI	The Women's Centre
Tánaiste, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister for Defence	Therapy NI
Tar Anall	Thirtyone:Eight
Tara Centre	Thompson House
Team Aspie	Toni Finnimore, Transformational Project Management
Teenage Cancer Trust	Tourette Alliance
Templepatrick Action Community Association	Training For Women Network
The Advantage Foundation Ltd	Trainsafe UK
The BEAM Centre, Derry Londonderry	Trans Pride NI
The Bridge Association	TransgenderNI
The Changing Lives Initiative	Trinity Methodist Church and Community Venue, Lisburn
The Churches Trust Ltd	Truth Recovery Process
The Commissioner for older people	Turas
The Commissioner for Victims and Survivors	Twaddell Woodvale Residents Association
The Compassionate Friends	UDR Association Coleraine Branch
The Croft Community	Ulster Human Rights Watch
The Donkey Sanctuary Assisted Therapy Centre Belfast	Ulster Unionist Party (UUP)
The Dry Arch Children's Centres	Ulster-Scots Community Network
The Elmfield Institute	University Road, Belfast
The Ely Centre	URBAN COMMUNITY CHEF CIC
The Falls Residents Association	UV Arts C.I.C
The Falls Women's Centre	Vantage Health and Life
The Girls' Brigade Northern Ireland	Versus Arthritis
The Harvest Project	Vespa World Days Belfast 2018
The Heart of Belfast Project	Veteran mental health support in Wales
The Hope Centre	Victims and Survivors Service
The HUBB Community Resource Centre	Victims Support Welfare Group

The Hummingbird Project	Vineyard Compassion
The Law Society of Northern Ireland	Volunteer Bikers Group - TEAM VBG
The Link Family & Community Centre	WAVE Through the Years
The Men's Advisory Project (MAP)	WAVE Trauma Centre, Ballymoney
The Orchardville Business Centre	WayMaker Child Therapy CIC
The Ortus Group	Wee Chicks Fitness CIC
The Parent Rooms	West Armagh Consortium
The Parole Commissioners for Northern Ireland	Willowbank Ltd
The PILS Project	Windsor Women's Centre
The Play Therapies Centre	WISPA - Women in Sport & Physical Activity
Women's Aid Antrim, Ballymena, Carrickfergus, Larne, Newtownabbey	Wounded Police & Families Association
Women's Aid Armagh Down Ltd	YMCA Ireland
Women's Aid Federation Northern Ireland	YMCA Lurgan
Women's Resource and Development Agency	Youth Education Health Advice
Women's Support Network	Youth Initiatives NI
WOMEN'STEC	Youthlife
World Peace Initiative	Zachary Geddis Break the Silence Trust

## Appendix 4      **Timetable for measures proposed**

(s4(3)(b) to Schedule 9)

### Timetable for measures proposed in Equality Scheme

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Lead responsibility</b>	<b>Timetable</b>
Section 75 Annual Progress report	Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance	As part of main Annual Report timetable by 30 September (annually)
Inequality audit	Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance	By 1 May 2026
Launch Consultation on draft action plan	Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance	By 1 September 2026
Finalised action plan published	Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance	15 January 2027
Arrangements for monitoring progress in place	Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance	Within 3 months of approval
Consultation list reviewed and updated	Director of Outreach	August (annually)
Screening reports		Quarterly from 15 July 2024
EQIA timetable		Annually as part of Section 75 Annual Progress report above
Review of monitoring information	Director of Outreach	Annually as part of preparation of Section 75 Annual Progress report
Publication of monitoring information	Director of Outreach	Annually as part of preparation of Section 75 Annual Progress report
Development of induction materials	Director of HR	By 1 May 2024
Development of ongoing skills and training requirements	Director of HR	By 1 October 2024 and annually
Assessing access to information and services	Assistant Commissioner for Investigations (Support)	Ongoing



Communication of equality scheme to staff	Chief Executive Officer	At 15 March; 1 May; 30 June 2024 to raise awareness, and then as necessary to communicate new or revised scheme
Communication of equality scheme to consultees	Director of Outreach	By 30 June 2024 and as necessary either to communicate new or revised scheme
Review of equality scheme	Director of Strategy, Planning and Performance	Every 5 years per the Equality Scheme (or earlier if requested)

## Appendix 5: Glossary of terms

**Equality Scheme:** A document outlining our organisation's commitment to promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations, as required by Schedule 9 of relevant legislation.

**Section 75:** Refers to the section of the legislation that mandates public authorities in Northern Ireland to promote equality of opportunity and good relations across nine equality categories.

**Statutory Duties:** Legal obligations imposed on public authorities to comply with the requirements outlined in relevant legislation, including promoting equality and good relations.

**Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA):** A systematic process used to assess the potential impact of policies, practices, or decisions on different equality groups and identify measures to mitigate any adverse effects.

**Consultation:** The process of seeking input and feedback from stakeholders, including staff, service users, community groups, and other relevant parties, on matters that may impact equality and diversity.

**Stakeholders:** Individuals or groups with a vested interest in or affected by the decisions, policies, or activities of an organisation, including staff, service users, community organisations, and advocacy groups.

**Accessibility:** Ensuring that information, services, and facilities are available and usable by all individuals, including those with disabilities or diverse needs, without encountering barriers.

**Inclusivity:** Creating an environment or process that is welcoming and accommodating to all individuals, regardless of their background, characteristics, or circumstances.

**Diversity:** The presence of differences among individuals or groups, including but not limited to differences in age, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status.

**Good Relations:** Efforts to promote understanding, respect, and positive interactions among individuals from different backgrounds, cultures, and communities to foster social cohesion and harmony.

**Training and Development:** Activities aimed at enhancing the knowledge, skills, and awareness of staff members on equality and diversity issues, including effective communication, understanding of statutory duties, and awareness of diverse needs.

**Communication:** The process of conveying information, ideas, or messages between individuals or groups through various channels and methods, including written, verbal, visual, and digital communication.

**Outreach:** Initiatives or activities aimed at reaching out to underserved or marginalised communities to provide information, support, or services and promote inclusion and consultation.

**Feedback Mechanisms:** Systems or processes established to solicit input, comments, or suggestions from stakeholders, including staff, service users, and community members, to inform decision-making and improve organisational practices.

**Partnership Working:** Collaborative efforts between organisations, agencies, or stakeholders to address common goals, share resources, and achieve mutual benefits, particularly in promoting equality and diversity.

**Adverse Impact:** Negative consequences or effects that policies, practices, or decisions may have on individuals or groups, particularly in relation to equality and diversity.

**Induction Training:** Initial training provided to new staff members to introduce them to our organisation, its policies, procedures, and expectations, including information on equality and diversity.

**Accessibility Standards:** Guidelines or criteria established to ensure that services, facilities, and digital content are accessible to individuals with disabilities, such as the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

**Cultural Sensitivity:** Awareness, understanding, and respect for cultural differences and diversity, including consideration of cultural norms, values, and beliefs in interactions and decision-making processes.

**Participatory Methods:** Approaches or techniques used to actively involve individuals or groups in decision-making processes, consultations, or activities, ensuring their voices are heard and valued.

**Inclusive Language:** Language that avoids discriminatory or exclusionary terms and instead promotes inclusivity, respect, and recognition of diverse identities and experiences.

**Stakeholder Consultation:** The process of involving stakeholders in organisational activities, decision-making, or consultations to gather input, build relationships, and foster collaboration.

**Community Outreach:** Efforts to connect with and engage members of the community, including underserved or marginalised groups, to raise awareness, provide information, and promote participation.

**Assistive Technologies:** Devices, tools, or software designed to assist individuals with disabilities in accessing information, communication, or services, such as screen readers, magnifiers, or alternative input devices.

**Social Media Campaigns:** Strategic efforts to raise awareness, promote consultation, or advocate for causes through social media platforms, utilising targeted messaging, visuals, and interactive features.

**Continuous Improvement:** A systematic approach to enhancing our organisational performance and effectiveness through ongoing evaluation, learning, and adaptation of practices and processes.

## Appendix 6: Measures in Detail

2.11 In addition to the internal arrangements outlined previously, there will be several further arrangements implemented to drive forward the implementation of our organisation's Equality Scheme. These arrangements will aim to ensure that equality and diversity considerations are embedded throughout the organisation's operations and culture.

### 2.12 **Dedicated Diversity Champions:**

- We will designate individuals in our teams within the organisation as EDI Champions to champion equality and diversity initiatives.
- These champions will serve as advocates for diversity and inclusion within their respective departments and teams and work to promote awareness and understanding of equality issues.

### 2.13 **Stakeholder Consultation Forums:**

- We will establish stakeholder consultation forums and advisory groups comprised of representatives from diverse backgrounds, including staff, service users, and community organisations.
- These forums will provide a platform for stakeholders to contribute feedback, share perspectives, and collaborate on initiatives to promote equality and diversity.

### 2.14 **Impact Assessments:**

- We will conduct Screening and Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) on policies, practices, and decision-making processes to identify potential disproportionate impacts on different equality groups.
- We will use the findings from Screenings and EQIAs to inform decision-making and mitigate any adverse effects on protected characteristics.

### 2.15 **Training:**

- We will provide ongoing diversity training and development opportunities for staff at all levels of the organisation.
- We will offer specialised training on topics such as inclusive leadership, unconscious bias awareness, and accommodating diverse needs.

### 2.18 **Public Reporting and Transparency:**

- We will publish annual reports on the organisation's progress in implementing the Equality Scheme and meeting its equality objectives.
- We will enhance transparency by making information about equality and diversity initiatives readily available to stakeholders through our website.

# Next Steps for Consultation Responses and Further Issues

We invite comments and constructive input from all respondents expressing their views on any aspect of the paper. Responses should be received on or before noon on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024 and should be addressed to:

Freepost ICRIR or

Email: [equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk)

Our preference would be for responses to be submitted through either of the two routes – email and postal.

This consultation focuses on the development of this Commission, it is not a consultation on the legislation (Northern Ireland Troubles (Legacy and Reconciliation) Act 2023).

Information provided in response to this Consultation, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA)).

Any personal data contained within your response will be deleted once the matter being consulted on has been concluded though the substance of the response may be retained.

This document is available in other accessible formats, such as large print, Braille, audio cassette and a variety of relevant minority languages if required. Please contact the Commission by email:

[equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk](mailto:equality@icrir.independent-inquiry.uk) to request this.

## Key milestones

Table below provides an overview of the key milestones and associated timelines for this consultation process:

Key Milestones	Timeline
Issue public consultation	6 March 2024
Consultation closes	29 May 2024

## Process after the consultation's publication

We will reconsider our draft Equality Scheme in light of the responses received to our consultation and consider whether to make any changes.

The responses received to this consultation will inform our final Equality Scheme that we will submit to the ECNI by 1 June 2024.