

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY

- Intent** To provide a framework with guiding principles for Council to advance diversity and inclusion.
- Scope** This policy applies to all Council services, facilities, programs, events and activities (external) as well as elected members and employees of the Cairns Regional Council, including contractors, consultants and temporary employees of Council (internal).

PURPOSE

Council appreciates the importance of diversity and is committed to creating a workplace culture of inclusion and respect for diversity. Council also plays a critical role in ensuring all residents and visitors to the region have equitable access to Council facilities, services, programs and activities as well as showing leadership in diversity and inclusion.

The principles of Social Justice as defined by the Australian Human Rights Commission are:

- Equity
- Access
- Participation
- Diversity
- Rights

These principles underpin Council's commitment to Diversity and Inclusion.

Diversity may result from a range of factors: age, gender, race, religion, cultural heritage, lifestyle, education, physical ability, appearance, sexuality, language or other factors. Council values the differences between people and the positive contribution this diversity has on our organisation and the community. We also recognise that some members of our community experience higher levels of discrimination, exclusion and access barriers as a result of these differences. Council has identified the following groups that may be more susceptible to these experiences:

- First Peoples
- People with a Disability and Neurodiversity
- Women
- People from CaLD backgrounds
- People of different religious beliefs and faiths
- Refugees and Asylum Seekers
- LGBTIQ+ people
- Young People
- Seniors
- Low Socio-Economic

This is not an exhaustive list and Council acknowledges that there are other diverse groups that may be included. Council also acknowledges the role of intersectionality and that some people may identify within more than one of these groups, and the different impact that has on their access to opportunities and resources.

Terminology:

Access	The ability to approach, enter or use a location or service.
Asylum Seeker	A person who has left their country is seeking protection from persecution but has not been legally recognized as a refugee.
CaLD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse.
Disability and Neurodiversity	A person that has a physical and/or mental limitation, restriction or impairment, which has lasted, or is likely to last, for at least six months and restricts everyday activities. Classifications of disability types are physical, intellectual, cognitive, neurological, visual, hearing and psychosocial.
Diversity	Refers to the range of human differences.
Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)	The principle that everyone should have equal access to employment opportunities based on merit.
Equality	Everyone has the same level of access to opportunities and resources.
Equity	The process of making adjustments or redistributing resources to address imbalances in access.
First Peoples	People of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent.
Human Rights	Basic rights and freedoms that belong to every person.
Inclusion	The practice of being included in a group or structure.
Intersectionality	The interconnected nature of identities and life experiences that may overlap and contribute to levels of discrimination and privilege.
LGBTIQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer, Plus (plus is used to represent other identities not listed in the acronym).
Low Socio-Economic Status	Refers to people who may have limited skills and fewer economic resources. Is usually measured by a combination of education, income and occupation.
Refugee	A person who has asked for protection from persecution and have been given refugee status.
Seniors	Peoples aged 55 years and older
Social Justice	Principle that everyone deserves equal economic, political and social rights and opportunities within society.
PWD	People with a disability.
Youth	People aged between 12-25 years old

Council acknowledges that the terminology listed above may not reflect individual preferences in language and classifications. Council has attempted to follow what is current best practice however notes these can sometimes be contentious and that language is constantly changing and being updated.

This policy provides a framework by which the organisation will actively foster a culture of diversity and inclusion, as well as provide the community with fair and equitable access. Three key foundational contexts form the basis through which opportunities are identified to achieve outcomes against the principles of Social Justice:

1. within the workplace (Council)
2. through the provision of Council services, facilities, and programs (Services)
3. in the broader community (Community)

PROVISIONS

Objectives

The responsibility of advancing diversity and inclusion lies with everyone, regardless of their role at Council. Each of the three foundations contain objectives that describe at a high level how Council intends to achieve the intent of this policy.

1. Council:

- Establishing employment pathways and workforce diversity for identified groups
- Establishing inclusive attraction and recruitment practices (EEO)

- Raising awareness, education and training for employees
- Increasing cultural safety in the workplace
- Being open to doing business differently

2. Services:

- Committed to removing barriers (both physical and attitudinal) that may prevent people from communicating with, or accessing Council services, facilities, and programs
- Building facilities that are accessible and welcoming to all
- Ensuring Council employees can provide the same level of service to all community members
- Ensuring Council programs are reflective of our diverse community and meet their needs

3. Community:

- Showing leadership in fostering the values of diversity and inclusion
- Championing the benefits of diversity and inclusion
- Advocating on behalf of community around key social justice and human rights issues
- Promoting the values of diversity and inclusion to local businesses, organisations, Non-Profit organisations and clubs and support them to remove barriers that may prevent the community from accessing their facilities, programs and services.

To achieve these objectives, Council has the following:

Name	DM Reference	Foundation it is applicable to:		
		1	2	3
Organisational Diversity and Inclusion Plan	#6943162	✓		
Disability Access and Inclusion Plan	#5457197	✓	✓	✓
Reconciliation Action Plan	#6141707	✓	✓	✓
Translations and Interpreter Access (AI)	#TBC	✓	✓	
Advocacy General Policy	#6666851			✓
First Peoples Engagement Guidelines	#TBC	✓		✓
Anti-Bullying, Sexual Harassment and Discrimination (AI)	#770217	✓		
Community Engagement Policy	#1031773	✓		✓
First Peoples Advisory Committee – Terms of Reference	#3428981	✓		✓
Welcoming Cities Program	#6600122		✓	✓
Community Resilience Strategy	#TBC		✓	✓

Related Documents:

Legislation	Authority
Human Rights Act 2019	Queensland
Anti-Discrimination Act 1991	Queensland
Sex Discrimination Act 1984	Commonwealth
Racial Discrimination Act 1975	Commonwealth
Disability Discrimination Act 1992	Commonwealth
Age Discrimination Act 2004	Commonwealth
Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986	Commonwealth

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This policy is to remain in force until otherwise determined by Council.

Director responsible for Review:

Lifestyle and Community

ORIGINALLY ADOPTED: 14/09/2022

CURRENT ADOPTION: 14/09/2022

DUE FOR REVISION: 14/09/2026

REVOKED/SUPERSEDED:



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Mica Martin
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER